
CHARLES
AND
CHARLOTTE.

V O L. II.



CHARLES
AND
CHARLOTTE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



Heaven first taught Letters for some Wretches aid.
POPE'S ELOISA.

L O N D O N :

Printed for WILLIAM LANE, Leadenhall-Street,
M.DCC.LXXVII.

CHARLES

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CHARLES

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CHARLES

C H A R L E S
A N D
C H A R L O T T E.

L E T T E R L X V.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

DR. Melbank acquaints me
you have hurt your wrist, and
that it gives you great pain: I feel a
sincere affliction upon two accounts
arising from this accident; first, be-
cause it occasions uneasiness to you,
and, secondly, because it prevents
your making use of the pen. How-

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ever,

ever, I charge you not to venture too soon to exert it. Rather let me be two or three days *without* your agreeable favours, than *with* them at the cost of your inconvenience: I will endeavour to support the loss of your correspondence, in the hope that your health may be the sooner restored: and as I myself get better every hour, I will do my best to entertain you with a double portion of packets.

Am I not grown a great philosopher? do I not at last acquiesce in your own system? do I not obey, your inhibitions with even a scrupulous ceremony? and am I not a mere correspondent? am I not the cold creature you wish me?

Yes



Yes Charlotte, I will yield to your punctilious principles. I will not murmur, nor will attempt again to invade your repose by desiring a personal interview, till the way to it is smoothed by providence. That this will be the case, I am certain. In the mean time I will endeavour to be contented with this remote, yet endearing intercourse, though Melbank has been labouring to persuade me it would be more for the health of my mind and body that I dropt the pleasures of the pen. Of this he can never convince me; though I have received from him the tenderest treatment, and find him to be an able surgeon, and an amiable man.

I this morning had a penny post letter from him, which, that I may do *him* justice, and give *your* gentle heart satisfaction, I inclose.

Adieu,

CHARLES.

LETTER LXVI.

Dr. MELBANK to CHARLES.

(Inclosed in the above.)

WHAT a pity it is that many of those articles of conduct, which are merely points of equity, should, in the opinion of the greater

part

part of the world, be considered as *obligations* : happy, however, it is for the tranquility of delicate minds, when the balance of favours between man and man is *even*, because then no irksome sensation of superiority remains to distress either ; and the interchange is honourable, exact, and mutual. This, Sir, is the state of the case between you and I. I am almost ready to confess myself indebted to the accident that brought us together. The wounds, in which I have been an happy instrument of cure, have been the means of making known to me a man of eminent abilities, and excellent qualities. In the midst of torture and cross circumstances, how have I been entertained

by his remarks ! above all other parts of his character, I admire the liberality of his sentiments: at least they are to be admired in the theory. How shall I rejoice to find them equal in the practice! to slide again into the first person, and speak plainly; have you, my dear Sir, generosity enough to receive the inclosed, and to use it till I may have occasion to re-demand it? and will you do me the justice to believe I have had so much more pleasure than trouble in visiting you, that, unless you are so good as to set down my attention to the score of friendship, I shall be compelled to think myself too heavily indebted, and so despair of your intimacy; though I propose seeing you in the course of the day,

yet

yet this is a subject I hate to talk of,
and therefore I have sent you a post
letter, that the foolish blush of con-
fusion may be spared to both of us;
and therefore I beg we may not men-
tion this trifling point when we meet.
Your attention to this request will
very particularly oblige

E. MELBANK.

LETTER LXVII.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

MR. Templeton has transmitted
to me a little rural poem,
written by a literary friend of his:
there is a novelty in the story, and

a simplicity in the sentiment, that particularly recommends it to persons of feelings. For this reason I am going to transcribe it for your perusal.

I am always happier while I am employed either in thinking of you, or in any degree contributing to your entertainment. Were it not for bending my mind assiduously to these little epistolary engagements, and by these means soothing my hopes, and lulling my cares, I should not, I fear, be able to keep my promise, or withstand the impulses of my heart, which would carry me perforce into the apartment of Charlotte. I hope by to-morrow you will be able to take up the pen, and give me your
 opinion

opinion of the poem. A single line from your own hand, will agreeably convince me that you have again recovered the perfect use of it. Mr. Melbank is still anxious to have me suspend our correspondence: if he persists in this advice, I shall hate him in spite of his generosity. He is a great admirer of yours.

CHARLES.

SILVANA.

S I L V A N A,

The HIGHLAND SHEPHERDESS.

'T WAS in December's drear, and darksome
days

When the cold north sends forth his cutting blast :
'Twas when portentous clouds denoting storm,
'Their sable horrors roll'd around the heavens :
'Twas when, by force of hurricanots vast
The towering fir ev'n to his root was riven,
Till all of feather, or of fleece, forsook
The Highland hill, to shelter in the vale :
Then 'twas that poor Silvana to her grief
A prey, and reckless of the raving sky,
Sat on the perilous ridge of the rude rock,
That frowns upon the dizzy precipice.
Lonely she sat, and ne'er did sorrow seize
A form more delicate, a soul more kind.
Care, from her tender cheek, now woeful wan
The rose had torn, and in its stead the tear
Like dew-drops on the lily, settled there.
Five *fleecy* friends were to Silvana dear,
And more than five moons wasted had they fed
On the scant reliques of Silvana's store.

The

The prickly furze, the weed-entangled grass,
 The thistly blade, the heavy hemlock's leaf,
 The bitter mallow, and the flowery fern,
 Her sheep ne'er cropt, but herbs of sweeter taste,
 The vernal pasturage of voluptuous meads,
 The richest grazings of the daintiest dell,
 The velvet verdure of the violet vale;
 The honied clover, and the fragrant blade.
 Her daily journey to the fertile farms
 Was for the purchase of the day's repast.
 But *now* her eye was fix'd, her bosom bare,
 Irregularly throbbing with its woe;
 Wild to the pitiless winds her scatter'd locks
 Luxurious floated; half her shoulder spread,
 And half in deep disorder stream'd in air:
 Uplift to heaven her snowy arms were rais'd
 In passion, or in prayer; at last a sigh
 Heav'd from her hapless heart, and thus she sung.

I.

"I will soon be o'er—No more despair,
 Silvana's eyes shall soon be dry,
 Man, feeble man, was born to bear;
 "To look about him, and to die."

Then

II.

Then soft awhile, and gentle death,
 Silvana's passing-bell shall toll,
 Her sheep shall catch her wand'ring breath,
 And heaven shall watch the flying soul.

III.

This fluttering spirit shall be free:
 My sheep, mean-time, demand my care;
 They browse, and bound round yonder tree,
 But ah!—their *shepherd* is not there.

IV.

Yet cease awhile—I'll not despair.
 I see my shepherd in the sky,
 Tho' man's frail race *were* born to bear
 The wedded *soul* shall *never* die.

LETTER

F. MELBANK.

LET

LETTER LXVIII.

Dr. MELBANK to CHARLOTTE.

I FEEL myself to blame. I have interdicted a correspondence, that gives both you and Charles pleasure, and I am much afraid the health of my patient was not the only motive that led me to this. The *real* motive I dare not discover. Be it some atonement, that I acquaint you Charles's health is not likely to be hurt, or his cure retarded, by the letters of Charlotte. I am in a very awkward situation, and beg to be excused for dropping the subject.

E. MELBANK.

LET-

LETTER LXIX.

From the same to

HAMLET TEMPLETON, Esq;

WHAT must I do, Mr. Templeton? I am under an embarrassment, from the pains of which I can by no means disengage myself? Will *you*, who are in some degree a party concerned, give me your advice. To cut short the idle formalities of ceremonious introduction, I must open to you the nature of my dilemma at once. Would you believe it, Mr. Templeton; while I have been attempting to cure Charles,

I have

I have been myself wounded by Charlotte: yes, Sir, widower as I am, again am I caught in the nets of beauty and merit, and am vainly trying every possible effort to forget the form that undid my repose." I have already been led into meanesses by this clandestine passion: it has urged me to desire Charlotte to forbear writing, under pretence of its interfering with my endeavours to restore Charles's health. I have visited this lovely woman several times, and have had the mortification to hear her heave a thousand sighs, and to see her shed a thousand tears; although she still remains fixt in her resolution of never again uniting herself to him, I have not had the courage to hint at my partiality;

ality; and to tell you the truth, Sir, I am withheld from such declarations from various motives. I have conceived a tender esteem for Charles, and I am unwilling to give him pain. I consider myself as standing in a very delicate light, and I know not how I can reconcile the different characters of a surgeon, a friend, and a lover. I fairly confess to you, I never saw any woman so formed to please, as Charlotte: as to her having been connected with another, were not that other Charles, I should make that no objection to offer her at once my heart, hand, and fortune. My profession is merely an object of my choice, not of necessity, and I have an income that could support

support the woman of my affections affluently. Were it not for the appearance of duplicity, which I cannot bear, I should certainly make such overtures to Charlotte, as might put both my love and my principles out of dispute. Such a woman, Sir, would grace the arms, and bless the heart, of a monarch; and I should rejoice to lead her by the hand into the embraces of all my family, and all my friends.

At the same time, what can I do? would not such advances, coming thus suddenly from me, look like taking advantages of sickness, and separation? Charles's tenderness is too palpable! Charlotte's love is by

no means worn off. I see them both every day, and I every day find in both fresh excellencies which it would be inhuman to injure. Who knows what may happen ! Cleora may die ; many events, may, under the direction of an indulgent god, auspiciously concur to bring Charles and Charlotte once more into the arms of each other. I may be looked upon as an usurper, as a supplanter of affection : and what makes the matter still worse, is, that I have very lately done myself the pleasure of accommodating Charles with what the world considers an important favour. I have lent him money ; it is therefore the worst time in the world to make proposals. The poor lad's nerves too, are at present all
on

on the tremble; his strength is but just returning; his heart is greatly agitated; he cannot get out of his chamber—what, can be done Mr. Templeton? as a friend to all parties, tell me—I am truly wretched myself, and yet I should be ashamed, if I wanted fortitude to prevent the wretchedness of others; particularly those, whom I have had the honour to oblige.

I am,
your obedient servant,
E. MELBANK.

LETTER LXX.

HAMLET TEMPLETON, Esq;
to Dr. MELBANK.

YOUR letter brought one of the greatest surprises I ever felt since I came into the world: nor can I possibly give my sentiments upon a point so particularly delicate. For aught I see, you are all to be pitied; and you all deserve, and have *my* unavailing sympathy. Heaven direct you all into such measures as may ultimately be for the general felicity! at present, I can only remain anxious and wretched, till I hear that the wishes

wishes of each are granted; and this, believe me, Sir, will be the first prayer of my heart.

H. T.

LETTER LXXI.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

NOT a word yet? if you were better, I should have had a written testimony of it; and therefore I have the painful certainty to know you are worse—perhaps, Charlotte, you have deceived me: a sprain'd wrist may be a pretence to conceal an accident infinitely more
C 3 alarming;

alarming; you may, for aught I know,
 be at this moment on the bed of
 sickness—you may be in the agonies
 of a fore distemper—you may have
 broken a limb. I have questioned
 Dr. Melbank, who it seems attends
 you, pretty closely on this subject;
 and I do not half like his answers.
 He stammers; he offers me a feeble
 excuse; he equivocates; and he ab-
 ruptly goes away blushing, because
 he cannot disguise the truth, in the
 veil of a better apology. My imagi-
 nation represents you in a condition,
 at which my heart aches; perhaps
 you are fainting, and I am not by
 to catch you in my arms: you are
 perhaps sick, and I am not present to
 administer the cordials of recovery—
 you

you are weeping, and I am too distant to kiss away the tear——the point is plain; and this is the truth of the whole matter; if you do not, with your own hand, answer this hasty letter, which I dispatch by a porter, I shall draw the natural conclusions—I shall judge the horrors of your situation, and, weak as I am, venture abroad to offer my assistance.

CHARLES.

C 4 LET

LETTER LXXII.

CHARLOTTE to CHARLES.

IT is with a sincere pleasure I find myself again able to address my valuable correspondent; and I use this first moment of resuming the pen to thank him for his letters, and the poem: all which, I read with great satisfaction. It is very true that I have been some time in your debt, but you will now receive a receipt in full; for this epistle will certainly compensate for all that is due, and make the balances even. Since the correspondence on my side
has

has been necessarily suspended, Dr. Melbank has favoured me with a friendly call or two, and, in his last visit finding me much dispirited, he entertained me by reciting the principal passages in his own life. I was saying how hard it was to *lose a friend*, at the time one is most thoroughly sensible of his merit: upon this he sighed—pressed his hand upon his heart, and wiping a tear from his eyes, said, it was *indeed hard*; “ I have experienced it most severely, Madam, said he, and, notwithstanding my present flow of fortune, and fulness of practice, I dare say I have undergone more than you would wish an *enemy* to suffer. As you seem to think your own situa-
tion

tion deplorable, although your friend is still *alive*, if you have half an hour to spare, I will run over some scenes that may serve to make you contented with your own state, by comparing it with that of others.

But on looking a second time at your letter, I perceive your messenger is waiting an answer, upon which account I must reserve the sketch of our friend's history till my next letter.

I send this, merely to shew you the desired *hand writing* of

CHARLOTTE.

L E T.

LETTER LXXIII.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

“IF I were now to die, ’twere now to be most happy.” The written evidence of your recovery, and the manifest marks of health I can trace in your letter, are all such circumstances of sincere joy to me, that I could suffer without complaining, and would, at any time pay for your felicity, the price of my own. Poor Melbank! he has been these two or three days unusually pensive, and I suppose it proceeds from having related past scenes of anxiety. I know

know enough of him to admire his character: I have had several fine assurances of his being in possession of a noble heart. He shook me by the hand this morning, and, as he went out of the door, he turned his face, and discovered a tear. If he has had any tender disappointments, heaven knows I pity him. You have made me sigh for his story.

Adieu,

CHARLES.

L E T-

LETTER LXXIV.

CHARLOTTE to CHARLES.

“**M**Y adventures, Madam,” said Dr. Melbank, “shall be related as briefly as the intricacy and variety of them will admit—I was born under all the smiles of fortune, having a man of sense and property for my father, a woman of beauty and honour for my mother, and no other relations whatever alive, that were likely to dispute with me, the right of succession. But alas! Madam, from my first birth-day to the seventh year of my age, it seemed to be the contrivance

contrivance of fortune to enrich me : for m father engaged in a business that ruined his constitution and estate in the same instant. He extended his trade till he became involved in a thousand hopeless calamities — He carried his ambitious schemes of merchandise, till he rashly run into all the extravagance of giving credit : he trusted to an agent, who, as is common enough, turned out a rascal, and being at last obliged to attend vigilantly to his own affairs, he embarked for the east, where he had considerable dealings, to gather in desperate debts to a great amount—there he caught a fever in the passage—lingered for some days—wrote a letter to my mother during his sickness,

sickness, and absolutely died at last, a martyr to that ambition, which induces a man to give up, according to the common phrase—a certainty for an uncertainty. True it is, that I was his only heir ; but had there been fifty competitors, not one would have long felt the spirit of litigation rising within them : for, when matters came to be examined, the poor man's ambition for becoming the man of business, had buried his real estate in the ruins of an imaginary property : and all that he left behind him descended into the hands of a merciless crew of creditors, who verified at least, one passage of scripture, by taking care, in all such cases, that

that the sins of the father shall be visited on the children."

"My mother, Madam, loved her husband so much better than her own life, that in the phrenzy of affection, she was frequently prevented from making a sacrifice to his ashes, of that beautiful form on which he had doated: time, however, brought her usual lenitive, and the widow began at length to think it her duty to share the poverty and misfortunes that was by this event, entailed upon her child. Her constitution was always delicate, and this fore stroke gave additional force to a disorder which was hereditary to the female side of our family. She had the
asthma

asthma in all its violence, and, in a few months, it reduced her to a shadow. As this excellent woman had been too affectionate to secure to herself an original marriage-settlement, and the claimants were therefore generous enough to allow a few suits of half-worn apparel, which properly belonged to her own person; and, after this, it was not easy to find a poorer pair than now exhibited themselves in Mrs. Melbank, and her fatherless son."

"Maternal love, nevertheless, increased, in proportion to the necessity there was to exert it. For some little time she tried the feelings of those who had been the companions

of her prosperity, but that soon failing, she applied to a resource, which may generally be depended on ; *i. e.* provided the application be earnest : in a word, Madam, she withdrew from the smiling apologies, and civil evasions of friendship, to her own industry. Being educated in all the accomplishments of her sex, and particularly skilful at her needle, she chearfully undertook to assist ladies in those very decorations which she was a short time before entitled to wear herself—Nay—such was her humility, she condescended to manage the work of those very women, whom in the life-time of her late husband, she visited upon terms of equality and intimacy ; but fortune,
you

you know, Madam, elevates and degrades, sometimes in the same hour."

"From these efforts, I mean out of her work, she not only accommodated me with food, but instruction, paying regularly for my schooling, and providing for me every comfort of mind and body."

"In this manner, with very few helps, were we subsisted for several years, till at length her disorder grew so bad, that she was totally unable to proceed in the business—a business, Madam, which want had urged her to undertake. As I was deficient neither in gratitude, nor filial feelings, and was by this time ar-

rived at the age of distinguishing, judge the state of my mind, at perceiving the dear person to whom I had been so long indebted, declining away in silent and wasting agony, under my eye : her physician recommended change of air ; and I therefore removed her a few miles distant, to a little village contiguous to the Thames. Still, Madam, the cruel distemper gained upon all our endeavours, and neither sunshine, verdure, nor rural breezes, could restore her. Sixteen days did she lay panting in the extremity, at the end of which time, we had exhausted all the little savings that the exactest œconomy had hoarded up against a rainy day, after the necessary expences

pences of our subsistence were answered."

"For my own part, bred as I was to no employment, and but just raw from school, I knew neither the value of talents, nor the means of getting money, by art, or by diligence; but our affairs were now come to the crisis. My poor mother lay speechless : the woman with whom we lodged, pitied her extremely, and, as an instance of it, began to tell us how inconvenient it was for folks like she and her husband, who had a small house, to let lodgings. The husband spoke first obliquely, and then directly, of a cousin, that was upon the road, to stay with them

during the fair time ; and, in the progress of their observations, they made very pertinent comments on those excellent places of resource for poor wretches—the public hospitals—Assylums, said they, where those who want diet and doctors, and yet have no method to procure either, may get both for nothing—— In this exigence, Madam, upon the edge of every thing dreadful, famine on the one hand, and despair on the other, I sallied out of the house, resolved not to come back with an empty pocket—Accordingly, in the distraction of my mind, and in the simplicity of my head, I opened my case to the very first person I saw. The first person I saw, happened to be

be such a one, as, I fear, “take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again.” He was on horseback, not resident in the town, but merely passing through it. Without scarce knowing what I was about, I told him the incoherent story, but told it to the heart——and never——no, Madam——by my soul, never shall I forget the anxious air, and melting tone with which he said—Talk no more, poor youth, talk no more, but quickly lead me to your mother. What a tear did he shed on my hand as he dismounted from his horse—O God! Madam, my only surviving parent was breathing her last as we entered. She had not strength to speak—she could resist

the attacks of her fate, but faintly—it was just allowed her to say, fault-erily—kiss me, my son ; and even as I was stooping to obey her, the lip quivered in death—in the next moment she was an angel.”

“ This worthy stranger buried my mother with all the attention, and sacred decency, due to a parent of his own ; and, for a long time afterwards, he supplied me with every thing that cou’d sooth the mind, or comfort the body. But, alas ! this refuge was soon taken from me ; the gentleman died suddenly, and I was once more left upon the wide world, an orphan, without a friend. I was now reduced to seek for subsistence
in

in the capacity of a servant, and had the good fortune to be taken in by a neighbouring apothecary for the menial purpose of carrying out his drugs. It was at *his* house, Madam, that I first saw the exact resemblance of yourself—similar in sense—similar in beauty. I shall not, however, trouble you with the annals of my courtship: the apothecary took a particular liking to me, and after I had been his servant two years, exalted me to the dignity of being his *son*, destitute as I was, and gave me his only daughter, intending, that I should continue with him, and learn his business. He died, however, in less than six weeks, and continued his partiality, by bequeathing to me and his beloved Maria

—so

—so was my wife called—his whole fortune, amounting to near three hundred pounds a year in landed property, besides a good house: as an honest man, I must tell you, Madam, that the apothecary had a nephew, which, having disoblged him, he never had seen for many years, and though he was once to have been the chief heir, was not so much as mentioned in his last sentiments.”

“ Of this, indeed, I did not hear, till I had spent the whole fortune; for Maria had never seen the young man, and his uncle never spoke of him to her. Since I have known the fact, I have vainly endeavoured to find the youth, that I might make him

him amends ; but my researches have not been yet rewarded, and the apothecary's old friends tell me they believe he is dead."

"A foolish ambition is, I believe, hereditary to my family. I had no sooner got a competence, than I left the country—sold my house there ; and, thinking that my observation had qualified me for the apothecary-business, I opened, in an absurd hurry, a shop of my own. I laid out a large sum, to the worst advantage, with a druggist, and finding myself without connections, I *advertised* for custom. During this period I was surely possessed, for, contrary to the intreaties of my wife, whom I adored,

adored, even while I contradicted, I resolved to go on : nay, not to have any reserve with you, I was so plung'd in this medical madness, that I purchased all the pompous *paraphernalia* of the doctor, and, in the shop of an apothecary, had all the tremendous apparatus of a surgeon. I give you leave to laugh at me, when I tell you, that I cropt close to my ears, a fine flowing head of hair, to surround my lunatic pate by a set of enormous curls, rising, in formidable exactness, tier above tier, in all the majesty of a physician. I became perfect in the pat on the snuff-box, the management of the grayer muscles, and the swing of the cane : I knew the several uses of the watch. I affected

fected to abridge my Latin, and to
 sign the initials of my name as *unin-*
telligibly and obliquely as possible ;
 and, to sum up the whole, I should
 certainly have ventured upon an equi-
 page—that most necessary of all pom-
 pous appendages—had not my poor
 girl, with streaming eyes told me,
 (what really was but too probable) that
 all those accomplishments would be
 of no sort of service, and that she
 verily feared, neither chariots, nor
 chirurgical instruments, nor drugs,
 nor gallipots, would be of any conse-
 quence, till I could prove to the fa-
 culty, and to my friends, that I un-
 derstood something of the profession,
 beyond its *pomps and vanities*. I
 began to think there was some truth
 in

in my wife's remark, for I could neither get any mortal to tell me he was *sick*; nor any man that wished me well, who did not tell me that he was *sorry*. One day, however, fortune was determined to throw a job in my way. It happened that a man was thrown from a ladder as he was repairing a house, and, in his fall, broke his leg, at the threshold of my door—God forgive me, Madam, but judging it to be a simple fracture, I blessed heaven for the accident. I first scribbled a prescription, in the capacity of a *physician*, then made it as an *apothecary*, and lastly, I began to feel the part, as a *surgeon*. I began at last to bandage the leg, and to bleed the arm: but the agitation I was in,
 put

put me into such a trembling, that, (as I held the lancet unsteadily) I rambled from the vein; and fairly cut a slice from the brawny part of the arm: the patient, who was a stout fellow, started up enraged, and, swearing that I knew no more how to bleed a man than his trowel, hopp'd out of the shop in search of an abler operator--notwithstanding these ignominious testimonies of my ignorance, I was obstinate enough to persist, till partly by pomp, and partly by vanity, I exhausted poor Maria's whole fortune: from this time I involved my dear contented girl in the effects of my folly, and we were both, for a long time, the dupes of caprice, and the slaves of apology. Reflection,

tion, and the remorse attending it, threw me upon the bed of sickness, and *then* it was that Maria hired a nurse to wait upon me, while *she* made application, and wrote circular appeals to the most opulent of her acquaintance. She undertook this most irksome of all human engagements unknown to me; and it was not till after I got much better in my health, that she informed me of her miscarriage. Though I should have thought it impossible to turn the deaf ear to such a creature's request, yet she succeeded, as people of both sexes generally do upon the like occasions. Curious, although common, were the evasions made use of: *one*, had unluckily just parted from all his money

—a second, had taken an oath that he never would lend a farthing more to his own brother ; and the reason was, he had already suffered by his good-nature — a third, was excessively-grieved for *me*—a fourth, was excessively grieved for *Maria*—a fifth, was excessively glad to see folly, extravagance, and vanity, rewarded in this world—a sixth, told my wife that he made it a maxim never to give money, but that, as one good turn deserved another, he was ready to be even-handed with her, and give favour for favour—a seventh, said he had a sum to make up—and, in short, Madam, every one had an excuse ; so that poor Maria returned convinced, ~~that~~ indigence *professed*,

is the only state that must find desertion and deafness attend its petitions."

"By this time I felt my folly in all the bitterness of consciousness; and in the midst of all these calamities my wife was far advanced in her pregnancy, when she fell down stairs, hurried on a premature labour, and died in my arms in the evening of the ninth day—I was many times tempted to deeds of impiety and despair; and, having my affairs in the utmost disorder, I went on board a tender, and, with very little money in my pocket more than would pay my passage (and even that obtained by the sale of my drugs—for alas!

my

my estate was long since gone)—I landed in Jamaica.”

“ As if fortune was once more resolved to befriend me, I was in the very ship with a man of the first eminence as a surgeon, and of very considerable property, who had been to England to take *possession* of that property. His humanity was equal to his ingenuity: my history endeared me to him: he offered me his pity; and before we had arrived at the island, an accident happened that changed that pity into the tenderest friendship.”

“ He was one evening walking by moon-light upon the quarter deck,

E 2

when

when, by a sudden swell of the sea, (it being then a calm) he was thrown from his center, and fell overboard. As our ship was rolling, on he was soon at the stern, and I, who was the only person that saw his misfortune, ran to the boatswain, alarmed the company, and ordered out a boat with all dispatch: mean-time I threw a large rope from the poop, and he had the good luck to swim near enough to reach it—By some means or other the boat was entangled, and could not be easily extricated—I drew the gentleman by the rope to the ship's side—the calm was now quick dead, and little or no swell. I brought him within half a yard of the gunnel, and then, stooping

stooping till I was even with the
 water, I dipt in my arms, while
 another man had girt a rope round
 my middle, and by clasping the poor
 exhausted surgeon in my arms with
 all my violence, the man above, fast-
 ened the rope to a pully, and, at the
 risque of almost cutting me in two,
 for I was resolved not to let go my
 hold, drew us both up together.—
 From henceforward this gentleman
 and I were as brothers: for near
 five years and a half he in every
 respect treated me as such: I studied
 with the utmost diligence under his
 tuition in the art of anatomy.—I at-
 tended him over all the islands in
 every case, and to every patient, and
 in the end I became a tolerable pro-
 ficient.

ficient. In the mean time an opportunity of marrying to the utmost advantage, offered itself.— The idea of Maria prevented all such connections. Never was application more intense, nor perhaps better rewarded—and I owed every thing to my friend whose name was Williamson. Had Maria lived to see this reverse of fortune, what could have been added unto me — At length, however, Dr. Williamson (who had not a relation alive that was known to him) died of a fever, then epidemical, in Jamaica — He made his will in my favour, and left me every thing he could call his own upon earth, except the portrait of a lady that hung round his neck, and which,

in

in the same condition, was buried with him. The doctor's fortune was large, and it hath given me affluence, but not joy, for I had much rather my friend, and my wife had lived to share them.—”

“ Here, Charles, the doctor ended, and giving a heavy sigh, took me kindly by the hand, and wished me a good night. What a multitude of revolutions, croud into the petty span of human existence!”

Adieu.

CHARLOTTE.

E 4

LET-

LETTER LXXV.

H. TEMPLETON, Esq; to CHARLES.

I HAVE a strange piece of news to communicate to my dear Charles: an old friend of mine has just written to me on a curious subject. He has, it seems, lately seen Charlotte, and is over head and ears in love with her: he has a large fortune, and is smitten so smartly, that he writes me word he intends to make serious proposals of marriage; and only wants me to assure him the connection betwixt you and her is actually dissolved. I really believe

he

he is in earnest, and he is a man of good sense, great connections, and splendid circumstances, besides being in one of the genteelest professions. What the deuce am I to say to him on this point? He presses for an answer, and I am utterly unprepared for it. For your part, I suppose you would not give your consent to her being the wife of an emperor; and yet, if this spark should make honourable advances, and offer such terms as are extremely flattering and advantageous, how would you act in that case? would you *oppose*, or would you *promote*, or would you stand *neuter* upon the occasion? shall I not do right, if I tell my friend the subject is too nice to be spoken

spoken to—or shall I—but you must direct me. I will not send a slip of paper till you give me full instructions: and so, pray write to me immediately.

H. T.

LETTER LXXVI.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

I HAVE resolved to venture into the country for the benefit of the air, and, therefore, you must not expect to hear from me again for some days. For a short time therefore, adieu to

CHARLES.

LETTER

LETTER LXXVII.

Dr. MELBANK to CHARLOTTE.

HA V E you seen Charles? he has left his lodgings, and yet has taken nothing with him. His landlady informs me he went out with two well-dress'd men in a coach, although it was evidently very difficult for him to get in the carriage. If you have not heard from, or seen him, I shall be exceedingly uneasy. I had written the inclosed letter to you ever since yesterday morning, and kept it in my pocket, nor do I now send it without being doubtful whether

whether it ought not to be suppressed.
At all events, I beseech you not to
break it open, or pay it the least
attention till you are perfectly satis-
fied of the safety of Charles..

E. MELBANK.

TO CHARLOTTE
(Being the letter inclosed.)

I FEAR myself in the greatest
confusion, as I take up the pen
to address you : my design, however,
is laudable, and my wishes innocent.
There is a person of my acquaintance
who is lately become tenderly sensible
of

of your merit, and he is extremely anxious for me to endeavour to interest your sentiments on the subjects. At present, however, he will only dare to trouble you with a single question—Could any thing incline you to enter into the marriage state with any other person than Charles—in other words—could the utmost assiduity, attention, and ample fortunes, all at your disposal, prevail with you to accept the hand, and suffer any other object to cultivate your esteem, and lead you to the foot of the altar? I will take care that your reply to this shall be decisive; it shall inspire encouragement, or extinguish it for ever—not the

the passion—at least the declaration
of it.

I am,

your obedient servant,

E. MELBANK.

LETTER LXXVIII.

CHARLOTTE TO Dr. MELBANK,

I HAD a billet from my friend
Charles, a few minutes before I
received your favour, and though I
am afraid, he ventures out too soon,
yet I am acquainted with the design
of

of his excursion, which is only to get a little fresh air ; and I suppose he has taken a couple of friends with him to look out a pleasant and wholesome spot. After he is fixt, we shall certainly hear from him.

In relation, fir, to your inclosure, I should esteem myself unworthy the compliment intended me, if I did not instantly reply to a point of such consequence. Sensible as I am, fir, of the honour—greatly as I venerate the sacred rites to which you allude, it is clearly my duty to tell you, that I can never conceive myself justified in giving my hand to any person, while Charles is living. There are certain circumstances between us which
make

make this resolution, a matter of conscience; and though it is highly probable, I shall never be more than that gentleman's correspondent, yet, during his life, I am solemnly determined never to admit, or even *think* of the addresses of any other man upon earth. In *my* unlucky situation, this may sound affectedly, but indeed, sir, it is pure principle; and you cannot give me so elegant an instance of your friendship, as your interceding instantly with your acquaintance to forbear the revival of a matter, that *must* be unsuccessful.

I am,

your obedient servant,

CHARLOTTE.

L E T-

LETTER LXXIX.

CHARLES to H. T. Esq;

I WRITE this letter to you in a place of confinement, to which I was carried, just as I was preparing to walk abroad for the first time since my illness. The shock has returned upon me a violent fever; by some means or other I fainted away in the coach, from surprize and weakness; and, I now find the dressing has left my wound, and I am in a great deal of misery. This is the more unfortunate, as I am resolved not to let either Melbank or

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F

Charlotte

Charlotte know a syllable about my situation : I have been already too much obliged by the one, and I cannot bear to be for ever racking the generosity of the other. How any of my creditors could possibly detect my retreat, sequester'd as it was, and apart from all my former connections, I cannot guess : evident enough it is, I *am* in prison, and for a debt of all others the least recollected, because I do not now suffer for myself, but for having made myself foolishly answerable for the extravagance of another : yet the creditor is a very humane man, and some cruel tamperings must have been used with him, before he could be brought to this measure. To enquire,

quire, however, into these points is absurd. I am a most unfortunate man, and the hand of adversity is eternally upon me.

Since I came hither, I read your letter upon the subject of Charlotte's marriage. Ah! Mr. Templeton, how does *self-love* stand arm'd against the welfare of *social*? But sickness, and acute distress, hath, perhaps, mended both my heart and my ideas. I can now coolly consider myself as I really am; a man mark'd out from community to be eminently miserable: a young creature, whose own family have long confederated against him, even till the wishes, which could only be satisfied with his destruction, are

completed. Yes, dear Templeton, I now behold myself with an impartial eye—as a triumph to my enemies, as an anguish to my friends—as a distress to those who have ever connected themselves with me. I blush to examine this picture of the truth, and the only atonement I can make, is to make a decent retreat from conscious error at once. In the first place, Templeton, let me endeavour, though very late, to do justice to Charlotte. A friend of yours, with all the advantages of birth, fortune, virtues, and a genteel profession, will marry her—will lead her by the hand, you say, and offer her terms of tenderness and honour. It is enough Templeton. I see
plainly

plainly my duty, and I am inspired
by the prospect of it. Fully con-
vinced as you are of the gentleman's
merit and circumstances, I shall rely
upon your judgment, and enquire
no more—Pray present my compli-
ments to him, and after you have
read, and put a wafer under the
inclosed letter, deliver it to him
from

CHARLES.

ES

To

To _____

(Being the inclosure.)

S I R,

YOUR friend, Mr. Templeton, has written to me upon a very delicate occasion, and made known to me the wishes of your heart. Ah! sir, should those wishes be gratified, what a happiness will you enjoy? I need not, I presume, point out to you the merits of the object whose affections you design to solicit, although it is impossible you should, at present, be so intimately acquainted with them as I am: notwithstanding this,

this, fir, I have now so full a sense of what *ought*, and what, therefore, *shall* be done on my part, that you may rest satisfied of meeting no interruption from the writer of this letter: he *advises* you on the contrary, to make advances to the heart and hand of the loveliest of women: he is convinced how much it is for *your* felicity, and *her* reputation: his own selfish wishes he sacrifices to such considerations, and he declares solemnly, that the husband of Charlotte shall have the veneration of

CHARLES.

F 4

LET

LETTER LXXX.

CHARLES to Dr. MELBANK.

FINDING myself perfectly stout, and my wound free from any pain, I have been bold enough to make an excursion into the country, just within reach of the penny-post, through whose medium I send this, and *shall* send my future letters to you, and to Charlotte. I hope, by this time, your good sense and good nature have recommended you to that lady's attention: I even wish your sentiments may have weight with her, because, in that case,

case, you may be of service in a matter wherein her fortunes are nearly concerned. To speak plain, Dr. Melbank, an opportunity invites, which should not be neglected: a gentleman of great property, and many amiable qualities, is struck, I find (as indeed he well might be) with the beautiful form of Charlotte. His views are noble: he is well acquainted with her late connection, and yet his ambition is to make her his lawful wife. Judge how thoroughly I must be convinced of the importance of her inclining to this offer, when I can bring myself to desire you will deliver a letter to her upon the subject; a letter, Mr. Melbank, urging her by all the arguments

arguments that arise out of the case, fully contemplated, to accept the hand of another admirer : nay, more ; I enjoin you, sir, as you value the the character of this charming, but injured woman, to second my eloquence by yours, and to suggest every thing that may incline her to a measure so auspicious to her, in every respect. I send my letter under cover to you, and sealed, that you may first run your eye over it, and see the motives of the now resigned,

CHARLES.

To

TO CHARLOTTE.

(Inclosed.)

THE lessons of Charlotte, have at length brought Charles to a real sense of right and wrong: he has deliberated upon his duty several solitary hours, and the result of the whole is a plain conviction, that his continuing to correspond with her, is highly culpable. His weakness is constantly urging him to mix with his sentiments, the expressions of love, all which serve to fan a fire, that might otherwise be consumed. Charles is at last certain, that he is doing his fair friend an injury by this conduct.

conduct. He is persuading her to cherish a hopeless passion, and must consequently make her very unhappy. Were she left to the drift of her own prudence and wisdom, they would soon conquer a fatal flame, which is perhaps acquiring fresh force from being thus indirectly cherished. She is by these means also, kept out of those elegant circles which are so innocent, so advantageous, and so agreeable to female youth. Perhaps, if she were to go more into the world, she might meet the man whom she might yet like—whom she might honour with the name and privileges of a husband. The curse that attends Charles, may not attend another, and the advantages
of

of marriage, though, in real fact, they may not, in particular cases, contribute much to purity of *heart*, contribute infinitely to worldly reputation. Charles is become sensible of what Charlotte ought to do, should she receive advances of this honourable nature. As it is impossible she should act unkindly to any man, so, if any man of fortune, good temper, and good sense, should address her, it is the most serious advice of Charles, that she could indulge him with encouragement. Blinded no longer by the mists of passion, he can now see the train of desirable consequences attendant upon such a step. He sees the amiable Charlotte

caressed

caressed by those who before had the insolence to sneer.

He observes the beautiful martyr embraced by those who lately kept aloof: the very virtue and excellence, over which affected state and haughty chastity before triumphed, is now congratulated, complimented, and applauded.

She will, therefore, weigh these important articles, and whenever they present themselves to her acceptance, it is the hope of Charles, that she will not refuse them. That she may be tortured with no more improper sentiments, but lay such as these

these to her heart — is the last intruding prayer of

CHARLES.

LETTER LXXXI.

H. T. Esq; to Dr. MELBANK.

(Sent without a signature, in a feigned hand.)

THERE is a friend of yours in great distress at the — prison. He is *ill*, and your assistance, as a surgeon, would perhaps be desirable.

I am,

your humble servant.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXII.

CHARLES to H. T. Esq ;

READ the inclosed, and
pity

CHARLES.

CLEORA to CHARLES.

(Inclosed.)

YOU are not to attribute your
present confinement to the ma-
lice of the creditor, at whose suit
you were arrested. It was at the in-
stance of Mrs. P. your mother, who
takes

takes that method of bringing you to a sense of religion, and your duty. She considers a jail as the school of virtue, and apprehends you will now have something more important to employ yourself than in scribbling love-letters. Be assured, however, Sir, I had no hand in bringing upon you this trouble, and have but just heard it from the mouth of your creditor. Charlotte has, no doubt, by this time been to comfort you, and with her, I suppose, you think all situations equal.

CLEORA.

P. S. Your reversionary annuity is likely to be swallowed up in the expences of the law suit.

LETTER LXXXIII.

CHARLES to MRS. P.

MADAM.

SINCE the most fortunate circumstance that ever befel you, next to the *marriage* with my father, ('twere necessary to say that I mean his *death*) I have been sitting down many times, to write to you; sometimes in the ardour of an honest resentment, and sometimes, as a pleading, neglected child: but I have remained silent, even yet, and left you uncontrouled to the luxury of your good

good success, and of my anxieties. But your conscience now seems quite brought over to your side, and I can no longer suffer you to triumph, either in the benefit of my inheritance, or in the warm and wicked comforts of a wealthy widowhood—(oh ! what a robe of mourning has yours been madam) without trying upon you, the force of truth, and remonstrance: — without exerting one desperate experiment upon a heart, which habit and nature seem impregnantly to have fortified (as if it were the citadel of cruelty) against all the artillery of the parent, and of the woman !

G 2 The

The artifice and complottings, by which my destruction has been effected, are not unknown to me—How is it, Mrs. P. that you are able to reconcile to yourself, at the foreboding age of sixty-three, actions, of a colour so atrocious, that the penitence of your youth upwards were scarce sufficient to wipe away? by what casuistry have you pacified every private monition; and how skilful must have been that sophistry, by the magic of which, you are capable of sitting composed, at the head of a table, which you have *stolen* from your child? but why do I interrogate? 'tis a maxim in morality, that a bad woman has no *limit* to her crimes. You are gone

too far to recede; and I have no hope that you will mend in the progression, but expect that you must gather guilt, as you go onward to the grave, till it shall be the pleasure of providence (in mercy to *me* and *mankind*) to confine you there.

You accuse me to your acquaintance, of wildness, and profusion! 'Tis the wretched, pitiful, pretence of guilt, of *private* guilt, labouring for a *public apology*! To lay some error to my charge, was necessary to save you from the assaults of your *sex*; to palliate a conduct like your's, it was *indispensible*, to alledge something against me; since, to have tormented a child in such a manner,

without some *shadow* of occasion, would have argued a temper too monstrous to have been ranked among women; and the very boys would, in mere vengeance, have stoned the *inhuman mother*. But depend upon it, the sick pillow, will be to you a pillow of plagues: your bed, a bed of torture; and every feather there, will prove a thorn to torment you! Is this the language of lunacy? is it the violence of phrenzy? No, madam: faithful to the injuries of its master, this vindictive hand has hitherto confined itself to sentiments of the most *frigid moderation*. From this moment, I cut you away from the insulted sensibilities of affection: when nature discards

cards you, what claim can you have upon the heart of a son? and yet, do not think, I mean to forget you so far as to leave you to yourself. Believe me, madam, the day of such voluptuousness is past; and although you have robbed me of every right which should at least have divided with you the comforts of the world, I will henceforward take care, that you shall no more enjoy them, without the heaviest tax of indignant reprobation.

Your argument with my poor father was always in the same style: "I should spend his fortune." With what parental piety have you provided against this! but even grant-

ing it *had* been so: had I not on my side the claims of nature and of blood? and what were *your* claims, madam? The claims of a gay, needy woman, who after having been long setting in *vain*, the matrimonial trap, caught in it, at last, a gentleman of property: and, by these ingenious measures, rose from the indigence of your widowhood, to the dignity of a wife, and, by surviving the second husband—enjoyed widowhood again with all its most favourable perquisites. Consider your shattered fortunes, at the time of your matriculation into my father's family. Did you bring six-pence into that family, which you have thus iniquitously plundered? are you not scorned by the very people,

ple, whom the maxims of sordid courtesy oblige to receive the *hated guest* into company? nay, have not many of these openly discovered their indignation? has not your brother, the good Mr. S ———, often spoke warmly and disdainfully against the cruelties, which, at once mark and stain the character of sister and of christian? has not your usage to the unhappy writer of this letter, even in the soft moment of unoffending infancy, been the remonstrance of the rich, and the proverb of the poor? did not your inhumanity “grow with my growth, and strengthen with my strength,” till I was three times compelled to find resource from the unkindness of a mother,

ther, in the wanderings of the world, and in getting a meal in whatever part of that world I could obtain it? is there a pang, a sorrow, a disaster, or an agony, which, either your artifice, or open malignancy, has not inflicted upon me? have you not been the topic and the ridicule of the very man — Mr. W ———, whom you ordered to exert the tyranny of the rod over me, at an *age*, when the birch ought to have been retorted on his *own* posteriors? did not this very man, I say, point at you from the *public pulpit* in the presence of the Deity; and did not your conscience take alarm, till it extorted from you a paltry half crown, almost the *largest liberality*, I

ever

ever had from you? have I not stated facts? have I stated more? I appeal to an indignant *county*; I appeal to a large, attesting, *congregation*; was it not also amongst your schemes, to ship me away for the torrid terrors of Senegal? and was not the very captain—a sea captain, madam, who had passed his life on the rugged bosom of the *ocean*—too tender, to acquiesce in a stratagem, at which (though a woman projected it) the pity of a panther, and the bowels of a bear, might have revolted?

You often say in your conversation, that “I have lost my character:” oh! hard of heart! I have so: thanks

to

to my *own mother*. I have not only lost *that*, but my *health, happiness,* and *patrimony*! The latter of which you now riot in. What a pity, that you are in the wane! what a pity, that there should be *one*, who must soon plunder the plunderer! what a pity, that death must in a *very few years*, defraud the defrauder? these, however, I know, are thoughts, you pretend to indulge; you are among those magnanimous characters, that, with Roman fortitude, can bear pain, combat inconvenience, and smile at dissolution: this kind of stoicism I have heard you boast; and it must be confessed, you are, when in *perfect health*, a notable heroine. How well you can support poverty with a full purse!

purse! how much more independant and stationary you are, than your wicked Son: with a well furnish'd house, and affluent income at command? *my* house, madam; *my* fortune! but pray enjoy them: by the laws *of Rapine*, they are yours. I can earn the bread of fatigue, while yours is already provided (by your own impiety provided) and much good may *such provision* do you!

You are, I find, as you ever was, seconded by that infamous attorney, Mr. J.—, and I dare say you have made your story good, among such of your friends, as live at a *distance* from the great scene of your stratagems: with *them*, you are, alas!

the

the *best*, but most *unfortunate* of *parents*; a desolate widow woman, forsooth, who equally mourns, the loss of her lord, and the wanderings of her child! Oh! force of feminine fraud! execrable, execrable delusion! where, where, madam, must I look for a parallel to you? not in man, surely; not in any one of your own sex, I hope, to heaven! for the Countess of Macclesfield herself, whose infamy, you know, is published, was merciful and maternal to you. I fear we must quit the bounds of *this world*, in search of the simile, and, descending into another, find your resemblance, in the father of *finesse*. It is recorded, you know, madam, of him, and of him *only*,
that

that he could for his purposes, assume all shapes and characters; "make the worse, appear the better cause," and sometimes rose even a minister of light to determine precisely, whether he was in reality, an angel, or a fiend. There is, however, a uniformity in your character, not unworthy of you: to be complete in crime, is at least, more ingenious, than a half-witted, bungling villainy. You are above being content with your mere victory, in the Court of Chancery; and as the magistrate did not take care to *compel* you to preserve, my poor pittance in reversion, after you are gone to *account*, you seem resolved to delay the sale of the estate;

estate; and had rather, I perceive, pay away all the hopes I have in the world, in the interest of creditor's demands, than deposit the annuity in the funds; lest, it might be possible for your persecution to die with yourself. But you are determined, I find, to be consistent; and are, therefore, taking the only measures, which will enable your barbarity to survive the grave.

My exhausted paper warns me to quit you for the *present*; and I shall leave you, madam, to sup
 "with what appetite you may,"
 though I am confident your relish to it would be keener, were you to
 know

know that *I* have no supper to enjoy. In this important particular, however, I must disappoint you. My senses are still sufficient to the purposes of common life, even though liberty is taken from me. I have frequently heard you wish, that I could neither read nor write. Pre-resolved as you were, to drive me to a dependance on the efforts of writing and reading, I see nothing preposterous in the wish. I suppose then, it would give the total finish to your exultation, if it should please the omnipotent to touch the brain. The loss of my senses would, indeed, be joy to you ; and I know not whether your heart would not open wide enough to purchase for

me the bells, the whip, and strait waistcoat, could you at the same time purchase the delirium, which would make such dreadful furniture necessary. But, perhaps, this may never be crowded into the catalogue of my calamities: he, who feedeth the ravens, rewards, at least with bread, the efforts of an injured child. Providence will protect those, whom the parent has neglected: when the thoughtless ostrich leaves her egg under the sand, it is rescued from the violence of the wave, and is called into being, by the sun beam. The allusion is striking, madam. May God give you (though late in life) a soul to feel it. Farewell; I will write again soon. Your.

CHARLES.

P. S. I find, I am to enroll among the catalogue of your maternal indulgencies, my present confinement in the place from which this letter is dated. Had not this last stroke of barbarity been added to the rest, I had not even now taken up the retaliating pen: but I have been too long passive—you triumph in the severity with which I meet the attacks of calamity, and you have at length extorted from me a reply.

H 2

LET.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Mrs. P. to CHARLES.

YOU have written a very *long* letter, to a very *short* purpose, since it only induces me to exhaust a very few sentences upon you, in order to shew, with what a sincerity I despise you. Let them laugh, who win : let those who lose, rave : I have got the estate, and see no reason why I should interrupt the composure and luxury it produces, by putting myself in a passion.

I am, the victorious,

E. P.

LET-

LETTER LXXXV.

CHARLES to Mrs. P.

I THANK you, madam, for this last blow at my sensibility. May it be as effectual as you could possibly wish it! and may the hand that hath smitten, have no future opportunity to be uplifted, against the bleeding heart of

CHARLES.

H 3

LET

LETTER LXXXVI.

CHARLOTTE to H. T. Esq;

O God of heaven, Mr. Templeton, what am I to do now? All that I felt before, was lenity to the misery in which I am at this minute involved. Poor Charles is in a prison, without money, without health, without a friend! He has sent a letter to Mr. Melbank, and another to me, disguising his situation, and advising me to accept the hand of some other man, whom he has given to understand has addressed me. It was from Cleora, that I learned

learned his calamity, and that it is occasioned by the malice, and unnatural schemes of the restless Mrs. P. his mother. I have not seen Dr. Melbank since I received this killing intelligence ; and when I *do* see him, there is a certain circumstance which makes it highly improper, that I should apply to *him*, of all the men in the world, for relief. How, Mr. Templeton, how dreadfully is this excellent youth reduced ? what a soul must he possess to write such generous letters at a crisis so deplorable ? Perhaps he has had a return of his fever—perhaps—indeed, *ir*, I am almost distracted. I dare not go to him, nor can I stay away from him. Oh ! these cruel debts,

that are pulling perpetually at his heart-strings! Oh, sir, what step can I possibly take! Almighty God direct me!

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER LXXXVII.

From the same to the same.

TO what accumulated indignities, does the want of a fortune expose me? Soon after I had sealed my last letter to you, I hurried on my things, and walked out into the Park, to meditate on the steps I should take in this dilemma. I had not gone more than half the length
of

of the place, before a gentleman accosted me by my name, and enquired into the cause of that uneasiness, which was but too apparent. In the disorder of my heart, I told him the whole story: I soon recollected in this gentleman, one of the many who cared for Charles for his brilliant sense; and, as he had lately come to ample fortunes, I began to hope I had met the person who would assist in the necessary business. The debt, said I, is but an hundred guineas: what say you? will you condescend to serve a good man, whom you admire? will you *exalt* yourself by entering a place of confinement? if so, go to him: conceal from him by what means you heard of his misfortune,

fortune, and may the power that *fees*
the generosity, *reward* it.

He pencil'd down my address, in
order, as he said, to acquaint me
what he had done, took me kindly
by the hand, and bidding me be more
cheerful, left me. How happy was
I, to see him walk briskly down the
park! and, when out of sight, I
was ready to drop upon my knee in
gratitude to the God, who raised up
to my poor Charles, so able and so
amiable a protector.

I cheerfully went home; where I
had not arrived half an hour, before
a servant, in a livery I recollected,
brought me the following card. Oh!

Mr.

Mr. Templeton, why should I be thus insulted? yet, never tell Charles of it, if you have the least regard to the most unhappy

CHARLOTTE.

To CHARLOTTE.

YOU want an hundred guineas to serve your friend. I inclose you an hundred and fifty pounds. As it may not always be convenient for a lady to pay *one* way, she has, luckily for her, the choice of paying it another. Let Charles remain where he is at present—compliment me with the use of his pillow for this

this evening, and let the inclosed, pay for *my* lodging, with which, you may take *him* out to-morrow. I trust to your honour.

To _____

From CHARLOTTE.

WITHOUT pretending to any virtue, I may be allowed at least, pride enough to tell you, that you are too contemptible a being to be made an object of Charles's resentment ; and, therefore, you have the satisfaction of playing the poltroon with impunity. Your bribe I re-inclose, safely sealed up. May
Charles's

Charles's misfortunes never sink him so low, as to receive redress from the hand of infamy : he is a nobler object in his prison, than it is ever possible such a wretch as you should be in a palace.

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

CHARLOTTE to H. T. Esq;

I HAVE not yet either heard from, or seen Dr. Melbank ; and the inflexible Charles ceases to correspond. Though personally divided from this worthy man, I must even consider

consider myself as his nearest and dearest friend. What then must I suffer, to see myself unable to do the least service for him, in the greatest exigence. I have been to five of those men, who advertise to lend money on annuities: *my* poor pittance is so strangely bequeath'd, that I cannot possibly dispose of it. I fully know your circumscribed situation; I have sent every thing of value I could possibly collect to be pledged, and the utmost I can raise is fifty-two pounds. Cleora refuses to tell me the name and address of the creditor, or else, I might, perhaps, compromise the debt — oh! heavens, Mr. Templeton, I am this moment struck with a thought which

may

may prove propitious. I will put
it instantly in practice.

Adieu.

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER LXXXIX.

CHARLOTTE to CLEORA.

MADAM,

MONEY, which Charles lent,
is very unexpectedly paid into
my hands by the borrower, and I
inclose a note to the amount of it.
Charles's present situation may per-
haps be greatly alleviated by so
trifling

trifling a sum as fifty pounds; at least he will be glad to find, *one* of the many people he has obliged, turns out grateful: but, I am persuaded, he would receive *this* supply with double pleasure at the hand of Cleora. There are certain disguises which are really virtuous, upon account of their motives: ah! that I could prevail upon Cleora to pay Charles an immediate visit, and offer him the fifty pounds, as so much raised upon her by the security of her marriage settlement: in such a delusion there could be no criminality; for he does not yet look for the payment: at the same time, it might have such an affect upon Charles's heart, that a perfect reconciliation might be the consequence.

consequence. Let this be as it will,
I seal up the sum, and leave the method of conveyance to your direction.

I am,

MADAM,

Your obedient servant,

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER XC.

CHARLOTTE TO CHARLES.

(After Cleora declined to send the money from motives of not interfering.)

CRUEL as you are with your concealments, I have heard of your misfortune. In prosperity,

VOL. II.

I

Charles

Charles, I could forgive you for deserting me, but to drop my correspondence in your distress——how could you be so inhuman?—Though I flatter myself you are still a lover of justice, and, if so, you will not scruple to receive what accompanies this letter, which is at present of no service to me, and may be of some to you. You will recollect, Charles, that I did not refuse *your* address, on a similar subject, and I have, therefore, a right to expect you will not refuse *mine*. —Ah! Charles, do not at *such a time* reject my friendship:—do not despise and cast off my attentions, when they ought to be ten times doubled. Remember what I say to you, and farewell,

CHARLOTTE.

L E T-

LETTER XCI.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

O H! my dear, dear friend,
 I am oppressed—I labour—
 I am bowed to the very earth with
 with the weight of various obligations—I am almost ready to execrate
 the destiny that makes it necessary for
 for me to receive them—had my
 hard-hearted mother permitted my
 father to follow the feelings, which
 nature generally annexes to the pa-
 ternal character, I had then been able
 to *confer* benefits, instead of *receiving*
 them. I might *then* have sought out
 merit, diffidence, and undistinguished
 I 2 virtue,

virtue, from the barren vale of obscurity. Instead of which, I am condemned to be *myself* the object of benevolence:—how, madam,—how is a soul like mine to support the burden of perpetual favours & that they are *delicately* bestowed, is an aggravation. I feel them, Charlotte—I am conscious of them, and they enter into my soul.

This is the preamble to a transaction, of which I ought, perhaps, to blush. I am at liberty—I am free—my debt is wholly discharged—your letter was delivered to me on the *outside* of the prison door—I was just stepping into the coach that carried me to my old apartments;

ments;—my protector was leaning upon my arm.

Ah! Charlotte—such a friend—Whom do you think capable of such things? to whom is Charles indebted for his liberty? it is not to be conjectured—Know then that he who so lately saved my life by his skill, hath now saved my freedom by his generosity—Let the name of Melbank be carried upon the rosy wing of gratitude, to the heaven of heavens. I fold up his letter upon the subject: give it your tears, Charlotte—give the author of it your adoration—but pity; I charge you to pity, the insignificance of

CHARLES

L E T T E R XCII.

Dr. MELBANK's letter to CHARLES.

A FRIEND of mine, of the tribe of Israel, has offered to lend you a sum of five hundred pounds upon the reversion. He has been with me this morning, and upon terms, (moderate enough for a Jew) agrees to furnish the money. As this kind of brokerage business is generally kept a secret, I think you had better not mention it to any unconcerned person: by which means the matter may be privately managed, and nobody the wiser.

Adieu.

E. MELBANK.

L E T T E R

LETTER XCIII.

CHARLES to CHARLOTTE.

THE matter of raising money on my reversion is all *finesse*. It is all a trick of the unparaelled Melbank's, who wanted to deceive me into a notion, that I was making use of my own property. I wish to heaven we could all meet over a dish of tea, and that you would both give me an opportunity to prostrate myself in the presence of each other. Let me deliver your bank-bill with my own hand—

Adieu,

CHARLES.

LET-

LETTER XCIV.

CHARLOTTE TO CHARLES.

MELBANK, is too great for the compliment of common language. He dines with me to-morrow—are you disengaged—? dare you trust your heart—? Dr. Melbank says there is no fear—The dinner will be ready at three o'clock.

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER XCV.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

I AM to be trusted—Love yields the laurel to gratitude.

CHARLES.

LETTER

LETTER XCVL

CHARLOTTE to Dr. MEDBANK.

I HAVE written the invitation
you desired, with a trembling
hand.—He will come!

'Tis within a few hours of the ap-
pointment.—— The clock is now
striking twelve: every stroke vibrates
on my heart—every stroke is more
than a second nearer to the time.
Gracious God! Cleora is this minute
passing by my window—she kisses
her hand in compliment—I have

not

not the courage to call her up.—She goes on.—She is out of sight.

I will this instant forbid him.—He shall not, Dr. Melbank—he must not come.—I am feelingly persuaded of the consequences, and I—must—prevent them.

Adieu.

To the same, in continuation.

I CANNOT turn the apology to my mind.—I have written, and blotted, and rejected, three different cards—I shall be too abrupt—I wish you were with me, that

that my excuses might be delicate.—
 Heavens, Sir, it is past one.—I will
 forbid him at once.—And yet—Dr.
 Melbank—as he is so very calm—as
 he can view me with the moderation
 of friendship—as we shall talk upon
 ordinary subjects—methinks—per-
 haps —— I should suppose—oh,
 what shall I do—let me dispatch this
 letter to you, and let your immediate
 answer direct

CHARLOTTE.

I CAN NOT
 to my mind—I have written
 and blotted, and rejected, three dis-
 tinct letters—shall be too ab-
 rupt—I wish you were with me
 that

LETTER

LETTER XC VII.

Dr. MELBANK to CHARLOTTE.

I AM not very well, and yet I will be with you in ten minutes. You have nothing to apprehend : all will be as it *should*

be. I expect the deliver personally. I expect the favor of a visit from Dr. Melbank.

E. MELBANK.

Adieu

CHARLOTTE

LETTER

J. R. T.

LETTER XCVIII.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

SOMETHING has happened, that prevents me the pleasure of dining with you : I am, therefore, obliged to send *that* in a letter, which I at first designed to deliver personally. I expect the favor of a visit from Dr. Melbank in the evening.

Adieu.

CHARLES.

LET.

LETTER XCIX.

H. T. Esq; to CHARLES.

(Received before the above letter
was sent.)

AFTER having congratulated you on the recovery of your liberty, and on the acquisition of Dr. M——'s friendship, I must inform you, that you are more obliged to that gentleman, than you can at present imagine. It is a duty I owe both to him and to you, to inform you of what I know concerning the matter. Dr. Melbank, Charles,
is

is the very man, who applied to me on the subject of Charlotte's marriage—Dr. Melbank it is, who would lay himself, and his fortunes at her feet, *before the altar*: he it is, who can stifle his own passion, in pity to yours: he it is, who can serve the man that stands in the way of his tenderest wishes.

Now, Charles — now is your time.—Are you equal to an exalted action?—have you an ambition that scorns to be vanquished?—can you really practise the precepts, and the sentiments, expressed in the letter you desired me to deliver to the gentleman who courted Charlotte upon terms of honour? if you can do all these
great

great things, *this* is the critical moment : this is the golden opportunity.—You know what would exalt your character—you know what will sink the scale of obligations, disagreeable to the dignity of Charles's ambition. Conscious of your virtue, I will never speak or write another line on the affair, but will leave the noble heart to its natural operations.

H. T.

LET-

LETTER C.

Dr. MELBANK TO CHARLES.

DEAR CHARLES.

IN compliance with your whim,
 we have dined without you; but
 our tea will want its social flavour,
 and be totally insipid, if not inspirited
 by your company. The kettle is
 boiling with expectation.

E. MELBANK.

LETTER C.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE

WH Y, why did you suffer me to see you—why, after I had sent an apology, did you throw the temptation a second time in my way?—I saw you at the tea-table—you trembled as I came into the room!—what a vermilion covered your face!—by what a death-like paleness was it succeeded—how unlucky was Melbank's departure!—how fatal the illness that occasioned it!—Why were we left alone?—why, after such an absence, were

we

we permitted to be in the same chamber together? You were cruel enough not to draw away your hand as I took it—your resistance, was a more than half invitation—I carried it to the bosom, against which the heart was violently beating, and you did but faintly frown—the arm that I clasped round your neck, brought me within reach of your lips, and instead of throwing me away from the pressure, you permitted me to kiss them twice. Had not I at that moment brought Templeton's letter out of my pocket—what might have been the consequence? I bow reverently to the guardian Deity that saved us both.

Charlotte, we must meet no more—
 I give you to the only man in the
 world that deserves you. You say,
 he cannot speak upon the subject.—
 No matter for that—*His* delicacy
 should emulate *ours*. Every princi-
 ple that ought to actuate man and
 woman, demands that we should
 make the sacrifice to his happiness,
 mutually. He loves you unbound-
 edly.—His *honour* only, can exceed
 his *passion*.—He has thrown our ge-
 nerosity beyond all distance. There
 is but one way upon earth, to get
 again within sight of him. Severe, I
 perceive, will be the martyrdom on
 both sides.—Ah, Charlotte, we have
 deceived ourselves.—Our affection is
 more

more tenderly animated than it ever was—it was in yesterday's interview more palpable, than at any former period?—it glowed in our cheeks---it shone in our eyes---it streamed in our tears---it panted in our hearts---what of that?—the duty is proportioned to the danger: were we ten times dearer---if alas! *that* were possible, I am perfectly satisfied, we ought to submit. Who saved the life of Charles, but Melbank? who brought him by the hand out of a prison, but Melbank? what does he require in exchange for all this? he requires nothing: but, if circumstances favoured, he would make Charlotte the wife of his heart, his hand, and his fortune---what bene-

fits would result from that connection: all that we ought to desire: the felicity of the noblest character of God—an honest man; with riches, splendor, fashion, elegance in the train. You cannot love him—admit it: he cannot expect it at present. But still, you esteem, you venerate, you admire. His passion preys upon his health—I see it in his sudden paleness—I see it in his counterfeited spirits—I am so abundantly obliged, Charlotte, that I shall die—I shall die with confusion, if I am not by some means able to make a return. One great opportunity courts me. I can yield to him the object of my adoration—I can yield her in the bloom of beauty—in the warmest ardours

ardours of my affection. Yes, Charlotte, I can, in this case resign you, though I were to expire in the effort. God knows how my heart will bear it, but Charlotte--I will bear it, and have even still intrepidity enough to bid you imitate

CHARLES.

LETTER CII.

From the same to H. T. Esq;

WERE I not fully resolved to do justice to the advice of your letter, I should want the courage to answer it. But, cost what it will, you may depend upon the gratitude of

CHARLES.

L E T T E R CIII.

CHARLOTTE TO CHARLES.

I AM a very wretched woman, Charles, and know not to what fate I am reserved! never sure, was any one in so intricate an embarrassment. Upon one condition, however, I will make the sacrifice you desire, even though the loss of my senses should ensue. Ah! my friend, what an agonizing trial do you put me to! still I repeat it to you, if Charles will make *one* great offering to generosity, *another* shall immediately be made by

CHARLOTTE.

L E T

LETTER CIV.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

SENSIBLY touched as I now am, there can be no condition with which I shall not acquiesce, to to promote the honour of Charlotte, and the happiness of Mr. Melbank, who manifestly avoids me, lest his tenderness for you, and friendship for me, should betray him into an explanation. Make your own terms: they shall be adopted by

CHARLES.

LETTER

LETTER CV.

CHARLOTTE to CHARLES.

GIVE *your* hand to her, who has lawfully a right to it, and I will present mine to Mr. Melbank when he solicits it.

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER CVI.

CHARLES to CHARLOTTE.

CAN nothing less than such a circumstance satisfy you? however, to shew you how far I *can* go to perform what is dictated by conscience, I comply.

CHARLES.

LET-

LETTER CVII.

CHARLES to CLEORA.

SUPPOSING all past actions
obliterated, have you any parti-
cularity for

CHARLES.

LETTER CVIII.

CLEORA to CHARLES.

I THANK you, sir, more for
the hundred pounds you desired
Dr. Melbank to pay me, than for the
offer of your hand, which for many
delicate reasons, is not acceptable to

CLEORA.

LET-

LETTER CIX.

Dr. MELBANK to H. T. Esq;

YES, Mr. Templeton, I will go through what I have begun, or perish in the attempt.—I am not, however, boaster enough, to pretend that my heart is serene. Oh, Sir, it is torn almost to pieces. I feel my affection for Charlotte, and my admiration for Charles, increase upon me every hour. I have seen them both together, in the same room, and the struggles they had, to conceal their agitation from a third person, broke through

through all disguises.--Never did I behold such a scene--I could not support it, but withdrew, and left the lovers to themselves. Wretched as I am, I deplore the misfortune that keeps them asunder, and, though it may sound like romance, I would do much to promote their happiness. Nay, I *will* do every thing within my power. 'Tis, in my opinion, a base action to divide them--should Charlotte even yield to my proposals, upon a re-application of them, what would be the consequence? I should possess a woman's hand without all her heart. I should greatly add to the miseries of a man, already too much oppressed.--I cannot bear the thought--I shudder at it, Mr. Templeton. No, Sir,—let me not
take

take an undue advantage of the calamity that called me into the family.—It cannot be.—I foresee the horrors it will heap upon two prepossessed hearts.—They labour at indifference, and they discover attachment.—I will avoid both.—Some would smile at a man, on the wrong side of thirty, being thus conquered, by a tenderness, they would pardon only in eighteen. But frigid temper, are no proper judges of more soft and pathetic constitutions.—That I *do* love Charlotte, is, alas, too fatally true! but my affection shall not seduce me into a meanness, unworthy of

E. MELBANK.

LET

LETTER CX.

CHARLES to Dr. MELBANK.

VERY long, and very anxiously, have I waited for you: I want to consult you upon a point, not to be trusted to paper, or the post—but, what will, I know, weigh more with you than all the rest. I want to lay myself under another obligation to you.

CHARLES.

LETTER CXI.

The same to the same.

I AM sorry to inform you, dear Dr. Melbank, the wound in my breast is broke out again, and demands your immediate assistance.

CHARLES.

LETTER CXII.

Dr. MELBANK to CHARLES.

TOO generous, too amiable, Charles, how could you invent a stratagem, that you knew I could not suspect, or resist yielding to, in order to betray me into the interview, I had, with so cautious an officiousness, avoided. 'Twas a virtue that verged upon barbarity. Every one of your arguments, however, convince me, that I ought not to proceed—Charlotte, you say, will make me happy---she will conciliate the general joy, by submitting
to

to my wishes. How, Charles, can that be called a general joy, which would produce general infelicity?—she would *submit*—it may be so—the more angel she — But who could, under such circumstances, be base enough to suffer the submission? it can never be. I see my duty, and cannot suffer even the most eloquent passion — not the persuasive; all-subduing voice of love—to lead me from it.

— I will give my young man proper instructions as to your wound,

and am, your's,

E. MELBANK.

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L

L E T

LETTER CXIII.

CHARLOTTE TO CHARLES.

HOW much am I restored to my serenity, by the receipt of a letter, which I inclose, from the noble-minded Dr. Melbank. With regard to Cleora's refusal of your hand, I have only to observe, that I have done my duty, and you have done yours: let that, my dear friend, be a great satisfaction to us both. The worst is past; Dr. Melbank is satisfied——Cleora is supplied with money——Charles is at liberty, and Charlotte will soon acquire sufficient serenity to write to him—but you shall no longer be detained from the letter which has put me in spirits—

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER CXIV.

DR. MELBANK TO CHARLOTTE.

(Inclosed to Charles.)

IF you can forgive me for having tried, by a splendid proposal, to wean you from the affection you bear, and ever ought to bear to Charles, I may still expect your *friendship*, though I tell you that I would not *now* marry you for the uniting Indies; you have given my heart some pangs, and I have richly deserved them; for I should have held sacred the friendship betwixt you and Charles.—In my

more serious opinion, formed as it now is, on deliberation, I think you *should* not go to the altar with a monarch. The scenes, which I find you have both been engaged in, must have established a tenderness not to be conquered. If fortune ever favours, you will sanctify your mutual passion, by a public testimony: if it should *not*, I can scarce think either of you at liberty, conscientiously speaking, to enter into other engagements. I am leaving London for some weeks, but at my return I shall certainly enquire after the amiable correspondents. Mean time,

I am your

most obedient servant,

E. MELBANK.

L E T-

LETTER CXV.

CHARLES to CHARLOTTE.

MELBANK, is like one of those glorious phenomena which awes us weaker, and more imperfect mortals, into silence. He reaches the resolution of Charlotte, and throws out of sight the fortitude and dignity of Charles. As the poet therefore says of the deity, I say of Dr. Melbank. “I lose

“ Myself, in him!

“ Come then, expressive *silence!*
muse his praise.”

He is too great to talk about ; let us content ourselves with *thinking* of him.

I find Charlotte, we must not indulge ourselves in any more interviews—they are treacherous—they betray us. Let us endeavour to be contented with our usual pleasures of corresponding : let us follow strictly the advice of our friend. I am weak enough to confess to you, that I am more rejoiced at Dr. M——'s noble conquest over himself, than at any thing I ever felt since my existence. Had he married you—had he doubled my obstacles—had he taken you for ever from me—or had the cruel certainty

tainty of your being wife to another attended me——God knows, how I should have supported it.

All his generosity—even though he had thrown his whole fortune into my lap—would have shrunk before me; and such is the inconsistency of a tender heart—although I was myself the proposer and promoter of the union, had it been carried into execution, I believe I should have hated him, and hang'd myself. But as it is, I could build churches, and erect monuments to his memory: he has saved me from desperation: he has made me able to bear Charlotte's absence. While I know that she is not connected with another, I can bear to

live without her society. I am happy to hear constantly that she is well, that she attends to her intellectual improvements—that she will often read my letters, and employ herself in the innocent task of writing answers. All these things were, I own, very lately, considered as too little—but adversity brings us to a proper sense of rational blessings; and the prospect of everlastingly losing the tenderness of Charlotte, has made me satisfied with *that*, which at present *ought* to satisfy me. My situation indeed, appears, upon reflection, to be much more supportable, than I at first imagined! how much severer might it have been rendered, by either your marriage or your death! let me endeavour to procure

procure comfort from comparison.
 We are both happier than thousands
 —I have at this minute an instance
 in my eye to justify this, and, as I
 am sure it will serve to make us both
 more reconciled, I will, in my next
 letter, communicate it to you,

Adieu,

CHARLES.

LETTER CXVI.

From the same to the same.

WHILE I was at the house of
 the sheriffs officer, Charlotte,
 an adventure struck me so forcibly
 that it would be barbarous to refuse

(to

(to so tender a heart as your's) the recital of it; especially as it will shew you, that there are agonies in life, compared to which, *ours* are transient and trifling. In mourning our own calamities and disappointments, let us not too selfishly forget the calamity of *others*; but where (as in the *following* case) we see wretchedness *exceeding* our own, let us remember, that, not to be the *most* miserable, is at least one source of contentment; and instead of murmuring, we ought to sympathize.

Soon after I was arrested by Mr. Trap, and conveyed to his house, I beheld a young man sitting in a very pensive posture, resting his cheek up-

on one hand, and holding a pen in the other. He was not at all disconcerted at my being brought in, but smothered the sighs as well as he was able, and began to write.

“ There’s more stuff in the office, master, said a fellow that now entered the room—there’s two or three more of the *roe* and *doe* family come to visit you—it is a sad thing to be sure, but, *howsomdever*, you shall not go over the water to-night; you are every inch a *Gemmun*, I will say that, and you spend your money like a prince. No, no, God forbid I should carry any *Gemmun* out of my house while he behaves as such; so sit still, for you shan’t go to jail till to-morrow.”

Upon

Upon this Charlotte, the poor young man looked up, discovered his eyes swimming in tears, drew a handkerchief out of his pocket, and put it over his face.

Having a little recovered himself, he took up the pen again, and just as he was applying it to the paper, his features assumed something of consolation: but this again, was presently dashed by the appearance of the bailiff's wife, although, to do her justice, she was a very obliging woman.

There are some messages, you know, so displeasing in their own nature, or at least rendered so

so by the peculiar circumstances which introduce them, that they would seem disgusting, though they were to be delivered by the lips of the graces.

Mrs. Trap therefore, was as gracious as it is possible for any one to be, who presents a *bill* that requires to be discharged on the spot. Her harangue was to the following effect.

She was very sorry to trouble him, but it was a *rule*. It made all things, on all sides easy:—scores, were scores; short reckonings made long friendships—gentlemen were here to-day, and gone to-morrow; and therefore
 the

she hoped he would not be offended at the customs of the house.

Here, Charlotte, the prisoner took his hand from his pocket, from whence flew one solitary guinea, and he protested to God, that if the fiftieth part of that sum *more*, would purchase him a passport to paradise, he could not raise it.

I was, soon after this declaration, left alone with my fellow prisoner, who, still preserving an air of dejection, addressed me, as you will find it recited in my next letter.

Adieu,

CHARLES.

L E T -

LETTER CXVII.

From the same to the same.

WHY should you despair, fir,
 said I? because, replied Mr.
 Reynolds, my condition is on all sides
 desperate: besides that I have no
 money, I have no friends to procure
 it, nor any means or health to ac-
 quire it by: *you*, fir, are, no doubt,
 brought here by some misfortune,
 but God forbid you should match in
 misery the most unhappy man that is
 now speaking.

Poor

Poor as I was Charlotte, and destitute both of fortune and happiness, I put my hand into my purse, which being perceived by Reynolds, he waved his hand in token of disapprobation, and, with swimming eyes, exclaimed, pray take your hand from your purse, sir—I beseech you to take it away—I am resign'd—I bow me to the burden of my fortunes—money cannot, you know, Sir, medicine to a mind diseased—not the fortune of the East collected, could restore me to my tranquility.

I beg, Mr. Reynolds, said I, that we may pass the remainder of our evening

evening together without interruption: as we are united by a similar misfortune let us make it a social one. My fate, like yours, is not to be alleviated by money, yet let us, for this one night, live in the hope that the morning may bring comfort on her wings.

You are very polite, and propose what would be extremely agreeable, Sir, said Mr. Reynolds—but really—really—I—I—I—

Here Charlotte, he began to re-examine, and shake his pockets.

Oh fie, fie Sir, said I.

I went out, and ordered (agreeable to the slender state of my finances, and with a prudent recollection of the charges of the house) a comfortable supper. At my return, poor Mr. Reynolds was weeping over a letter, that, by the evidence of several places much worn, and a variety of foldings, appeared to have been the frequent subject of dear and solitary meditation. After he had read it, he pressed it to his heart, and kissed it; he looked steadily at me, and, thinking the sentiments would speak best for themselves, put it into my hand, without uttering a syllable.

As I know my lovely correspondent Charlotte, does not possess a heart
like

like that invulnerable piece of rock which lies putrifying in the bosom of Mr. Timothy Trap; as I know, on the contrary, she can pity the sorrows that even surpass her own, I will oblige her with a transcript of of the contents of the letter, which the prisoner trusted to my perusal.

(The inclosed Letter.)

Written on a Death-bed.

Most dear JAMES,

I Want the spirit to write, what I have not the strength to speak. As I have persuaded you to leave my bed-side for a short time, I will em-

M 2

ploy

ploy that interval, as well as I am able, in imparting to you some sentiments that you ought to know.

Your late miseries, oh my dear James, went too near my heart, and the day that your furniture and even our bed was last seized, I had the rashness to take poison—a poison my husband, which, though very slow, is certain in its operations. My doctor has discovered the occasion of my illness long ago, but in compliance with my intreaties, has hitherto concealed it from you.

How, James, can I sustain the sense of my guilt? instead of dying, I should have lived, on purpose to
make

make your life supportable in what
 a condition do I leave you. Oh my
 soul whither art thou going! Oh James
 — James — pity me — save me
 — protect me from — ~~do~~ —
 farewell — farewell

I can no more.

LUCIA REYNOLDS.

I shed, my Charlotte, over this
 epistle, the tears of sensibility: it was
 written in a faint hand, the words
 scarce legible, and every syllable
 spoke the disorder of the unfortunate
 writer. When I returned it to Mr.
 Reynolds he kissed it as before, fold-
 ed it up as a miser would have folded
 a bank bill of a thousand pounds,
 surveyed it on all sides with the great-

est tenderness, and then deposited it in a little box of ebony.

So ~~heaven~~ befriend me Sir, said he, as he put ~~up~~ the box, I would not part with this to be restored to all the fortune I had a right to inherit. No barbarous mother! no, inhuman parent, *this* you cannot take from me: of this inestimable relique you cannot rob me: this is a treasure your child can call his own, in defiance of all your artifices. I thank the great and good God, for the blessing—oh that I could find an honest man who would lay it upon my bosom when I enter the grave, for which I have long most pathetically petitioned.

Mr.

Mr. Reynolds, said I, you see that friend now before you, should I survive, and if not, I would recommend that office to a dear and faithful woman who would not neglect it.

I had scarce finished this promise, before Reynolds was upon his knees, and gave me, as he rose, with his hands clasping mine, such a look of acknowledgment, that I felt enter into my heart.

And is there then, said I, is there another Mrs. P.———and was there ever another Charlotte? did Mr. Reynolds call the one his wife, and and the other his mother? if so—you have still reason to be contented

Mr. Reynolds: the blessed society of such a wife, is more than a balance for the curses, keen as they are, of such a mother.

Blessed society, returned Mr. Reynolds, yes, Sir, *her's was* a blessed society: horrible as was the death she died, the life she lived might atone even for the crime of self destruction. She was eleven years Sir by my side, during which time we were never in prosperity, and yet—such was the charm that mutually bound us—we threw adversity into despair—*she was* my wife upon earth—*she is* an angel in heaven. If you Sir have got the counterpart of her, do not talk of pains, or prisons, or penalties—if there—

there is not something wrong in your heart—it must be happy.

Upon this, Charlotte, I ran over the heads of my history, at which even with the softness of a Desdemona, he wept particularly at such parts as related to my mother's barbarity, and my Charlotte's kindness—(I did not mention Cleora by name) and, after I

“ He gave me for my pains a world of sighs”

had ended, he promised to reward me with a scene or two from his own disastrous volume.

But

But the recital of this must be reserved to a future opportunity. I am this instant summoned upon indispensable business. Pity Reynolds, and pray for

CHARLES.

LETTER CXXVII.

Dr. MELBANK to H. T. Esq;

TEN days have I taken to compose an agitated, and, I had almost said, infatuated mind. I have engaged myself with unusual assiduity in the business of my profession—I have read—I have written—I have idled, I have toiled.—

Alas

Alas, Mr. Templeton, I am ashamed at my progress, or rather at my having made no progress at all.

I am still a slave to my passions—this charming woman, pre-engaged as she is, still crouds on my imagination—I have banished myself from her sight, and yet I see her: I have pretended an absence from town on purpose to avoid all formal communication, — yet, notwithstanding all this, I blush to tell you, I am a very miserable man. My friends perceive the effect in my looks, without knowing the cause—the cause I dare not mention, lest I deservedly become the object of ridicule. You have, dear Mr. Templeton, a gentle heart,
and

and it is some pleasure to correspond with you: Charlotte passed the other morning by my door, as it is usual with her, in her way to the park, and she called to know of my servant (supposing me to be out of town) whether I was well, when she last heard from me, and *when* I was expected to return. Happy was it for me that I had pre-instructed my servant in case of enquiry. An interview at such a crisis, would have certainly destroyed all my better resolutions: and yet as she went from the door, as I was in the street parlour, I could not avoid going to the window: the blinds favour'd me. I saw her depart—she was dress'd by the hand of Hebe, and, in my opinion,
more

more beautiful than ever. I heard her sweet and tuneful voice leave her best compliments for Dr. Melbank: the sound thrilled my soul. I was strongly inclined to open the door that led to the entry where she stood. I got up—took hold of the door handle—drew it—set it on the jar—every word she uttered was more distinct—“She cordially hoped I was quite well—should be exceedingly glad to see me upon my return to town—and desired her most affectionate compliments might be transmitted.”

“Oh Mr. Templeton, had she staid another minute, I should have discovered

covered myself and my infirmity.

Adieu: Pray for the returning
reason of your

E. MELBANK.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Mrs. P.——to CLEORA.

CHARLES, I find, is out of prison, chiefly through the means of Charlotte, who has contrived to raise him up a friend in the extravagance of one Dr. Melbank. No doubt the woman buys this man's friendship, at a pretty dear rate: however, Charles is mean enough to accept

accept of a favour by whatever means it is procured ; and as you have nothing to expect from his *generosity*, I would advise you to *threaten* him with putting some other of his creditors in pursuit of him ; thus, perhaps, you may extort through fears, what you cannot obtain through a sense of duty.

Your Mother,

E. P.

L E T.

LETTER CXXIX

The answer from Cleora.

I Can never adopt the measures you advise, to oppress Charles, it would only put it more out of his power to befriend me in point of money matters. He gives me from time to time as much as his circumstances admit, though I am not sure, if the presents be not chiefly made at the instance of Charlotte. I perceive it is a vain endeavour to disunite them. They still love, and still correspond.

Your obedient servant,

CLEORA.

LET-

LETTER CXXX.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

LONG as it is, I make no apology, Charlotte, but expect many thanks for giving you, as related by himself,

*The continuation of Mr. Reynolds's
History.*

I Will tell you only such other of my adventures Sir, as more immediately led me to my present situation, and that I may not unnecessarily increase your melancholy, I will relate the story with as much life and

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humour—

humour—for I have been engaged in whimsical scenes—as my poor exhausted spirits will permit.

Mr. Reynold's sat down, and began. The continuation of his narrative ran thus.

I shall begin this part of my history at the day I obtained, after various delightful difficulties, the hand of my beloved Lucia, who, being only a farmer's daughter, was considered by my mother (who can match your's for cruelty) as an intruder in the family, and therefore took every opportunity to insult her. This contemptuous treatment made us resolve to leave her house, and rather

ther earn our bread by daily labour, than be indebted for it to one who was constantly upbraiding us for the bounty. As I was not bred to any business, I was obliged to seek for such an employment, as depended rather on the application and versatility of genius, than any thing else. Having a well grounded classical education, and a sprightly vein for undetached compositions, I was advised, by a young friend who knew the town, to apply to the booksellers, and endeavour to get a livelihood from the pursuits of the press ; while my poor Lucia was to throw in her mite, by attending to the needle. With these views, and only three guineas and a half in our pockets, we

left this cruel mother's house one evening pretty late, (taking advantage of her absence from home) and set out to a neighbouring town, from whence we embarked in a waggon for London. Upon our arrival there, we called on our young metropolitan friend, who agreed the next morning to attend me to a printer of his acquaintance: we soon, through his assistance, produced a lodging, and, for the sake of literary convenience, it was in a small court, that led into Paternoster-row.

Upon going into the printer's shop the master surveyed me critically, and without any previous, or delicate ceremony, asked (as soon as he understood

flood my business—) what I could do? whether I had any *specimens* about me? whether I was a *verse-man*, or a *prose-man*? whether I had ever dabbled, in those doings, or was only going to throw my ink about the world?

My friend answered for me, that, I was a young man of genius who could turn my hand to any thing, that I would enter into immediate employ; and that my diligence might be depended on.

As authorship was thus early the necessary means of eating and drinking, it was not to be supposed I had much time to bestow upon the elegancies of composition; upon po-

lishing my periods, arranging my arguments, or decorating my sentiments: good, or good for nothing, so many pages were to produce so many pence, and therefore the main point was, to have the pen almost always in my hand, and scribble away, for the *supplies of the day*. Generally speaking, however, my task-masters, the booksellers, cut out my business, and told me *what*, and *how much* would be wanting that night.

If, as it is asserted, there be universal charms in variety; never ought man to be more contented, or think himself more entertained than myself; for I have often wrote round the whole circle of the sciences in twenty
four

four hours.—I purchased my breakfast by a page of politics—my dinner by a sheet of biography—my tea by history—my supper by a poem on the pleasures of the spring, and my lodging (which I shifted nearly as often as my subjects, and much oftner than my linen) by divinity. The next day came into play for the morning, a slice of mathematics—for noon, a plate of translation, and for the evening, a dish of indexes. My employers, sir, notwithstanding this labour of Hercules, made woeful complaints that my works did not sell, that they did not pay for paper and print—that *I was not known*: that unless I could get a popular writer to lend me his

name, they must decrease the copy-money.

About this time poor Lucia's wardrobe began to decline, though her lovely face was ever dressed in smiles of congratulation, or in tears of sympathy—my own apparel began to be truly literary, and I recollected to have often seen one of my book-sellers, whose name was Meadows, slide about his shop in the mornings, till after hair dressing time, in a green frock. We were both of a size, and I made formal proposals—this very frock Sir cost me a whole octavo volume of sermons, which were printed the following month, under the taking title of sermons, by a late right reverend

reverend prelate, warranted originals, and to be seen by the curious in his lordship's own hand writing. While I was labouring for the coat, I had no other wages till I had earned that, than what I could get by working after stated hours: and yet it was absolutely necessary for me and my wife to subsist in the interim: accordingly I sat up for two nights together, and wrote a large poem of the 1s. 6d. size, on conjugal tenderness, entitled the *faithful pair*. I hurried away with this the next morning to a new purchaser, who said if I would leave it ten days or a fortnight, he would give me his answer. This proposal, not suiting the situation of affairs at home, I went to a second dealer in these

these wares, who having looked at the title said, he had made an oath never to burn his fingers against the blaze of *poetry* any more; a third observed, that he would sell me a parcel of poems by the pound—and a fourth hinted, that if I would take the opposite side of the subject, and write in support of conjugal infidelity, he would treat with me.

Chagrined, wounded, desolate, and disgusted, I went into a pawnbroker's shop, and pledged a pocket-piece of silver, upon which—the value being four shillings—they lent me two and twenty pence; with this modicum I bought a few necessaries, and ran to offer them to the half-starved, but the

still uncomplaining Lucia. In her dear company I forgot every indignity, and every care, and we passed the whole evening over a mutton chop, and a pot of porter, with joy, content, and tenderness inexpressible.

The next morning, an hour before the time of going to work, I thought something agreeable might happen from trying the heart of Mr. Meadows; and setting myself seriously down to the task, while Lucia was asleep, I thus addressed the feelings of a Bookseller.

To

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To Mr. MEADOWS,

Bookseller, Paternoster-Row.

S I R,

MY wants are extreme: the opportunities of supplying them, are few. The greatest part of those wants have been brought about by misfortune: I have this day a bill coming due for house rent; or I should rather have said *room-rent*. Will you this once advance a single guinea, to prevent the unhappy consequences.

I am your

most grateful servant,

I. R.

Mr.

Mr. Meadows returned by the bearer, this short and laconic reply.

TO MR. REYNOLDS.

S I R,

WERE your principles equal to your understanding, there might be some encouragement; but while I admire you for the one, common honesty requires that I should despise you for the other.

J. MEADOWS.

Upon the receipt of this audacious letter, I thought my reason would have left me. I threatened vengeance

ance on the barbarous writer. Oh Sir, hear the circumstances that attended it. I had many misfortunes, and many debts upon me. I dared not venture abroad till the shades of the night befriended me. I sold the labours of my pen to this fellow, on his own terms, and I had entrusted him with the knowledge of my abode that I might correct what are called the proof sheets, as they come from the press: the wretch knew at what an advantage he took me, and that he might say almost any thing with impunity. But, oh Sir, what villany could exceed his insult at such a time — by a fellow too with whom I had scrupulously fulfilled every engagement, and who knew not a syllable of

of

of me or of my affairs, but from the vague breath of partial or vulgar report.

I did not however, answer his impudent letter, but crushed it in my hand, and to prevent its being seen by the too cruel and sympathizing Lucia, threw it into the fire.

Disdaining to work any more in the service of Meadows, I sought out a new task-master; I left the management of the remainder of the two and twenty pence to Lucia, and began my search. I at length made myself known to one, little celebrated, but very busy, and was directly to begin a new *family bible*, by a certain Dean
and

and a society of clergymen—my new master had just dined, and as the cloth was removing, I suppose he saw me look somewhat wishingly. He was very much addicted to wit, and thus facetiously began to interrogate.

“What, I warrant me now, you *eat* as well as I—that is, begging your pardon, you would if you could! ten to one but you *drink* too—eh? what a pity it is you *scribere-cum-dasho* gentry should be pestered with those plaguy passions, and hankerings after meat, drink and cloathing. Zounds! if I was an author ——— I would live like the * *camel* on my own *idearers*. Oh d——m——e you

* Meaning, very likely the Cameleon.

a'n't

you a'n't half an author yet—well, come, since thee hast such curses upon thee, thee canst not help 'em—so, here, Susan, Susan, (he went to the door of the kitchen stairs) bring up the *beef bones*, here's one of my authors a hungry, as usual—bring up also Susan, the suety pudding that was too little boiled a Sunday, and the broth that your mistress said tasted of the copper, and all the bits of broken bread that you can find, and make haste. Damme master author, I am better than a father to you, even before you have written a single syllable.

Better than a *mother* Sir, said I, you assuredly are; and then the tears

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sprang

sprang into my foolish eyes, as I compared the delicate dinner that I supposed she then might be eating, to the bare bones, stale pudding, coppery broth, and broken bread, that Susan was now going to place before me. However, as I was never quite so hungry since I was born, and as I knew my ever dear Lucia had sufficient for a frugal meal, I never eat a more hearty meal, or blessed heaven with more sincerity, that a meal (though coarse) was bestowed at all.

When Mr. Reynolds had finished the last sentence, Charlotte, the bailiff's servant brought in the supper, and his history was suspended. You must

must therefore suspend your curiosity,
till I can recollect the remainder
of this most interesting narrative.

Mean while I am your's

CHARLES.

LETTER CXXI.

From the same to the same.

The history of Mr. Reynolds con-
cluded.

WHEN supper was over, and
I had persuaded Mr. Rey-
nolds to drink a glass of wine, he
proceeded in this manner.

In the midst of this literary labour and indigence, a relation of Lucia's died, and bequeathed her the sum of two hundred pounds. This was a delicious windfall, and I received it in bank bills a month after the persons decease: violent, and immediate transitions however, are undesirable and dangerous: the leap, from poverty to plenty is truly alarming, and many a man's head turns giddy in making it. Such was the present case. I had no sooner got this precious treasure in my hands, than I gave a loose to imagination. As it was Lucia's money, I could not bear the idea of using it for my purposes. I considered the poor hut in which that excellent creature resided, as unworthy

worthy such an inhabitant, and therefore, immediately, and unknown to her, I took two little neat apartments, and furnished them to—what I knew to be her taste—I reflected upon the forlorn state of her wardrobe, and I repaired it by silks, laces, linens, &c. to the amount of almost one of the hundred pounds—with these purchases, which I made from time to time in the course of the first week, I, at a proper period, made Lucia acquainted, and the dear creature Sir was almost ready to faint at the tidings. She saw the conjugal delicacy and disinterestedness of my intentions, but she saw also the imprudence of laying out all our little property, in finery, that was wholly inconsistent

with our embarrassed state, and our future expectation. Luckily, however, my furniture was second hand, and I had eighteen guineas still in my possession: we therefore agreed to manage this with the utmost frugality, till I could supply myself by writing some work, that, by taking time and pains with it, might be likely to establish my reputation as an author; after which, according to the trite expression, a man may lie a-bed. In pursuance of these economical resolutions, I had fixed upon my subject, sketched out the plan of my design, entered upon the introductory parts, and began to kindle in the progress, when, lo! I had not, with all my foresight, provided against certain

certain demands which various trades-people had on their books against me, for former necessities.

One evening, after I had laid aside the pen, in order to enjoy the sweets of a conversation never tedious, and always tender; just as Lucia began to entertain me with a favourite song, a man came into our apartment and presented a bill for thirty-seven pounds, which had been owing him, and collecting to that size, for upwards of two years. Startled as I was, I hardly knew how to stammer forth an apology, and the creditor perceiving my confusion took it as a token of my distress, and was therefore resolved to have his money on the spot. I equi-

vocated. He left me abruptly, and, with the authority of a creditor, flapt to my dining-room door with a shew of indignation. Our song, and all our harmony, you may be sure, was now broken, and we were left to many sorrowful reflections.

Our affection, however Sir, was of so delicate a nature, that all the ardours of romance were realized in my conduct, and even pastoral sentiments scarce did justice, to the tenderness of my passion.

Nature had formed her for eminence, and such was her mind, that she bore with me the burden of anxiety, and doubled the sense of better fortune,

fortune, at the time that she shared it. But the great charm which endeared and distinguished her, was, that fervid fortitude, that gave her strength (even after the bed was torn from under her) to go through the most piercing inconvenience, and the hardest trials. The insults I sustained however, were too much for her, and she grew quite melancholy, and would sometimes pass whole days without being able to utter a word—at last the hour approached when all the miseries of my existence were to be collected to a point—when fortune, piqued at my former defiance of her, by one decisive blow—the moment at last came—which—which—you know the rest, Sir—spare—
 spare

spare—oh spare me the repetition—
 Lucia is in her grave—excuse—ex-
 cuse me—

Mr. Reynolds, my dear Charlotte,
 broke off abruptly—so must *Charles*.

P. S. My tears will give me leave,
 in pity to *you*, to inform you, that
 I this very day am to have Mr.
 Reynolds's company at dinner,
 which may serve to shew that he
 is no longer in a house of confine-
 ment. Adieu.

LETTER CXXII.

CHARLOTTE TO CHARLES.

HOW truly do I pity the unfor-
 fortunate Reynolds!—how
 much

much am I obliged to Charles for the narrative — but how infinitely do I honour him for the sentiment and intelligence of the postscript — and so you have restored the prisoner, to freedom — what a fate was his Lucia's — ah Charles, how many tears did I sacrifice to her death-bed letter — merciless creditors — what a woman — what a wife did ye destroy ! how will Templeton rejoice — how will the good Melbank, who is arrived, congratulate Charles on the service he has rendered such a character as Mr. Reynolds ! — in a jail, only for twenty-five pounds ! — a man of his brilliance — good God ! — but he is now at large, and through my Charles's means — oh my friend, bring us all together.

gether — what have I said? — no
 Charles — no — adieu to visits — fatal
 indulgencies! — and yet — surely —
 when we think of Reynolds — when
 his harder, much harder fortunes are
 considered — we may be well satisfied
 — cannot we cherish the most tender
 and innocent friendship, without once
 cherishing a *guilty* thought! how un-
 reasonable! oh Charles, let us be
 above it — we will assuredly all have
 one happy meeting — I will put con-
 fidence in *you*, because I know I can
 now safely trust *myself*. Farewell.
 You shall soon hear again from

CHARLOTTE

LET-

LETTER CXXIII.

CHARLOTTE to Dr. MELBANK.

CHARLOTTE, hears of her good doctor's return to town with great pleasure, particularly, as she wants both his advice and company on Wednesday, to meet Charles, and an agreeable stranger.

LETTER CXXIV.

Dr. MELBANK to CHARLOTTE.

IT is impossible to resist your invitation. I shall attend it—and yet,

yet, is there not a little tincture of—
of—of—pshaw, nonsense, into what
idle stuff am I rambling! you may
depend upon me.

E. MELBANK.

LETTER CXXV.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

MR. Reynolds will not be the
only visitor you may expect
on Wednesday: you will see another
of your friends on that day, besides
Dr. Melbank, the *incomparable*, and
the *unchangeable*

CHARLES.

LET.

LETTER CXXVI.

CHARLES to CLEORA.

I Find that the base-minded Mrs. P. refuses any longer to provide for the child, and that she who has pillaged all the father's effects, and the son's property, has the impudence to plead poverty—what pangs Cleora are in store for that woman! what a sickness is she preparing for her soul! as to the child, since no intreaties can prevail with you to trust it into my arms, pray send for it directly into *your's*; and as my affairs are now likely

to

to mend a little, I shall be able to accommodate both you and your little companion.

CHARLES.

LETTER CXXVII.

Dr. MELBANK to H. T. Esq;

NOW Sir, indeed, my misery is completed—I have had another interview with Charlotte, in the presence of Charles—a stranger was there—oh, Mr. Templeton, *such* a stranger: upon his coming into the room

room, I was greatly struck with the resemblance of features which I shall never forget. At dinner, Charles drank to his health, under the name of Mr. Reynolds—I no sooner heard the sound, than my heart ceased to beat—I felt a mixture of inexpressible misery, and fell back in my chair. They officiously recovered me to greater misery,—whom do you think sat opposite to me, Sir?—the only man in the world that I had injured—the nephew of that very Mr. Reynolds, who was the father of my Maria, and who, but for some petty offence—some partial misrepresentations, was to have heired the fortunes that were given to me. Reynolds, Sir, said I—are those features,

the exact image of Mr. Stokes, the property of Mr. Reynolds—of the very person who is now before me? Mr. Stokes, Sir, replied he, was my uncle, the brother of my mother—but I was, when very young, most falsely painted to him, and never saw him afterwards: he had a daughter then at a boarding school.

He *had* so, Sir, said I, almost sobbing, and that daughter's name was—

Maria Stokes, said he—

And that Maria Stokes, rejoined I, was *my wife*—and she is—

Where said Mr. Reynolds?

With

With the God that made her—
 but is it possible, resumed I, that you
 should be this very Mr. Reynolds,
 —where have you been: by what
 means have you eluded my most in-
 dustrious enquiries—I have been bu-
 ried, Sir, he returned, amongst the
 booksellers—I have been condemned
 under fifty names, to conceal from the
 gripe of the creditor a wretched body
 not worth the fatigue of a single search
 —I have never shewn my face—or
 applied by letters to those who basely
 deserted me—I have hid myself in
 the thickness of a thousand disguises
 —and, in short Sir, my kind bene-
 factor who sits next to me will explain
 the rest.

Upon this Mr. Templeton, Charles withdrew a moment with Charlotte, and on their return, put a packet of letters into my hand, containing—
 what do you think Sir?—nothing less than the *history of Mr. Reynold's*.—
 I have borrowed these letters, Sir, and now send them in franks for your reading—look into them Sir with an eye of compassion.—

When I had finished this perusal of them, I made use of the little strength I had left, to fall upon my knee—I took Mr. Reynolds's hand; and so Sir, said I—I have at last found out the unhappy gentleman, whose natural expectations I have despoiled—why did you not leave
 some

some clue to your residence, before the death of your uncle,—I was only a servant in his family—I did not even know, at that time, that he had a nephew in being—I—I—in a word Sir, as this lady has furnished me with your narrative—she will be so kind to give you a sketch of mine—in the mean while let me retire into another room—I cannot support it any longer without relief.

I went Mr. Templeton, into a small book closet—flung myself on a sofa which was there, and burst into tears.

I must make a pause—
 P 3 L E T.

LETTER CXXVIII.

The same to the same.

CHARLES and Charlotte, after an hour's absence, (in which I will not attempt to describe what I felt) came to me: each of them took a hand, and led me into the apartment again — Mr. Reynolds advanced and began to address me.

“ We have both had our misfortunes, Sir, said he—but I can see no trace of guilt in your conduct. As to my uncle, I had long buried my expectations

expectations of receiving any benefit from him, nor did I ever see him but five times in my life: my mother turned his heart and his passions against me; and I am now rejoiced to hear she has not been the better or the richer upon that account. My indulging friend Charles has, since you were out of the room, trusted to me a paper (sent him by this lady) which relates all I could desire to know—nay *more* than I could desire—for I find my cousin is dead—you have lost *your* wife—Alas! alas! Sir and I—I have lost *mine*.”

He wept, Mr. Templeton, and I had but too many reasons to sympathize.

The delicacy of Charles and Charlotte during this surprizing interview is not to be imagined, their passion seemed to be now quite extinguished, and they attended only to us.

I had a thousand things to say, and yet I was obliged to go away, with a full heart, without saying any thing to the purpose.

I am,

Your unhappy

E. MELBANK.

P. S. Your care of my sister was
T. E. I receive her at your hands

with many tender thanks.

T. E.

LETTER CXXIX.

CHARLOTTE to CHARLES.

WHAT a scene—what a party was yesterday's! I have not heard from either Dr. Melbank, or Mr. Reynolds. Consider my impatience, and all that you know, communicate to

CHARLOTTE.

P. S. Your care of my sister was noble, I receive her at your hands with many tender thanks.

L. E. T.

LETTER CXXX.

Dr. MELBANK to CHARLES.

PRAY, my dear Charles, forward
the inclosed to Mr. Reynolds,
and let illness excuse my making
this letter to you so abrupt.

E. MELBANK.

The

LET-

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(The Inclosed.)

To Mr. REYNOLDS.

I Dreamed last night that I was the murderer of your wife—I saw her in my visions—the figure of your cousin too, arose close by the side of her, to reproach me.—I have certainly been the unknown instrument of mischief to many—pray come to me that I may quiet my conscience—to have been even the innocent cause of anguish, is too much for a delicate heart—how intricate are the mazes of providence—I charge you to come.

E. MELBANK.

LET-

LETTER CXXXI.

CHARLES to CHARLOTTE.

I Have only time to fold up Dr. Melbank's note, and to scribble a hasty copy of his letter to Mr. Reynolds—that gentleman and I are this moment going to the house of that noble character.

Adieu,

CHARLES.

LETTER

LETTER CXXXII.

CLEORA to CHARLOTTE.

MADAM,

I Have at length brought myself to be really sorry, you and Charles, cannot be properly re-united. As I now see that the circumstances which happened *prior* to, and *since* our separation, would render a re-union intolerably *imperfect*; and as *you* are evidently the woman of his choice, I am willing to enter into articles of mutual release, and try how far it is possible for your return to Charles to be

be put upon a *moral* footing—I thank you madam, for the papers that have *past* between you, giving an account of your whole intercourse. I am at least glad to see that Charles does not dwell on the *vile report* that was promulgated against my reputation.

In regard to any difference in our tempers, and disagreement in *other* respects, we have both smarted for *them* sufficiently, without dragging in to the account the most barbarous report that ever was invented to destroy the fame of a woman. I confess to you the impossibility, (as things have fallen out) of *my* ever being happy with Charles—whatever he may think—I should now scorn

as

as much the advances to so unprofitable a reconciliation as himself—we were never comfortable—at least we were never fond after the first month—I was dupe enough to listen to a love-tale made by a man upon the bachelor's ramble, under a fictitious name—every step we both took was romantic; and had I not been as much besotted with a wild, mad-headed scheme as himself, I might have seen *prudence*, without going to * Scotland for *repentance*. But the deed is done, and I wish with all my heart it were *undone*. How can you madam, believe Charles a *constant* man?—can it be possible he should

* Charles and Cleora were married in that Kingdom

have

have such a principle in his nature? ingenuity—wit—address—elegance—I am ready to grant him—but *fidelity* to any one favourite, whether wife or not, is surely out of the list of things practicable. You say, he will, after he has come to some terms with his creditors, contribute to my genteeler support. He writes me word he will also assist me in a proper provision for the child.—

If he fulfills these promises, heaven knows, I never desire a closer intercourse with him, and I have resolved in my mind to mark this as the last letter he shall ever see, or Charlotte ever receive on the subject: for, to tell you the truth I do not
see

see that I have divided you from him,
to any good purpose. I do not pray
for his death, or my own, but never
did a matrimonial prisoner pray oft-
ner, or more earnestly for liberty,
and an honourable escape from *bon-
dage*.

I am

Madam,

In conclusion of our correspondence,

your humble servant,

CLEORA.

P. S. I hear that Charles's mother
frets and laughs, alternately, at the
receipt of his retaliating letter. She
says she will persecute him for it
without mercy. I should hope *she*

Q

would

would not put her threats in execution, but *I* have friendship enough for his safety, to beg you will put *him* upon his guard.

LETTER CXXIII.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

ALAS Charlotte, I have been witness to another scene more tender, even than the first: Reynolds and Melbank were an hour together, without the intrusions of a third person; and when I joined them,

them, they were tenderly locked in embraces: the poor doctor is exceedingly ill, and we both sat by his bed-side all night. About twelve o'clock this morning he fell into a short slumber, and Reynolds went to bed. I begin, indeed, now Charlotte, to consider *our* pangs of separation as trifling, in opposition to what I have lately heard, and lately seen. Dr. M——mentioned *you* several times in the course of the night with the greatest marks of respect—kissed the picture of the deceased Maria—wept again over the fate of Lucia—pitied Charles—and bathed the hands of Mr. Reynolds in tears.—I shall return to him again, as soon as I have put a wafer under

this, for the satisfaction of the sympathizing Charlotte.

CHARLES.

LETTER CXXIV.

Dr. MELBANK to H. T. Esq;

I Am held up in my bed—and I have past the night in a fever—do not think me superstitious if I say—if I prophecy—that this will be the last time you will receive a letter from me, Poor Reynolds's situation teras me one way, and my affection

for

for Charlotte another—I love her yet Sir—yes Mr. Templeton, guilty as I know myself—God knows I love her yet—I have the killing circumstances too, of having Charles constantly before me, and exerting himself more indefatigably than my nurse—his hand is often in mine—he smoothes my bed-cloaths—he offers me medicines—he keeps a death-like silence in the room—he most tenderly avoids speaking of Charlotte—I am afraid he still suspects my lurking passion. What can possibly have made me thus weak! I am a child—I am a child Mr. Templeton—may God bless you.

E. MELBANK.

LETTER CXXV.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

Twelve o'Clock at Night.

THE doctor is quite delirious,
Charlotte—he cries out by fits
—and enquires for Mr. Reynolds—
Mr. Reynolds appears, and he bids
him avoid his presence. Before his
fever had reduced him to this state,
he sat up in his night gown, and or-
dered the lawyer to come to his bed-
side—he waved us out of the room
smilingly—the servants were called
as witnesses—a will was made—we
re-entered,

re-entered, and he placed us both on different sides of his bed. "I am afraid, dear friends, said he, I have suffered from visiting lately a poor woman in the Fleet prison—I have reason to think the fever she has since died of is of the contagious kind—
 As I was, I visited her on the very evening after I had found the long lost Mr. Reynolds—my spirits were then very bad.—"

"I desire you will take the bare possibility of it for granted—I must not suffer you to enter my chamber again my friends, till I am better—when I am certain as to the nature of my disorder, you shall be again with joy admitted: till then—farewell—farewell."

Q 4

The

The doctor pressed our hands very softly—desired us to wash the fingers in hungary water--and then threw the sheet over his face. Touched at the solemnly affecting manner, in which he spoke, Reynolds and I withdrew, and have not dared to enter against his exprefs inhibitions since.

CHARLES.

LETTER CXXVI.

JAMES SPEDMAN to CHARLES.

S I R,

MY poor dear master orders me to tell you that his physician has pronounced his disorder to be catching,

catching, and requests you will on no account come near the house, and that you will not suffer Mr. Reynolds to leave London.

Your humble servant,

J. SPEDMAN.

LETTER CXXVII.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

AFFECTION has I fear hurried me into danger—I past the best part of the last night in the bed-chamber of Dr. Melbank—no fear of his discovering me—he knows no one.

His

His situation cannot possibly be described—still does he lie, Charlotte, in the struggles of death—his lips silent his eye closed—and the sigh breaking laboriously from his bosom—I kissed his hand—I could not help it Charlotte—it was the hand that saved me from destruction.—He loves Charlotte too—some veneration is due to him for that.—

A loose paper lay on his pillow—I have pillaged it—and the theft has been repaid by an almost broken heart.

Read it Charlotte—what a character is this to the last. Pray assiduously for his recovery.—

CHARLES.

The

The Paper.

TO CHARLES—CHARLOTTE, and
Mr. REYNOLDS.

LET those to whom this loose
sheet, written at different snatch-
es, is addressed, religiously observe
the sentiments it contains.

Be the friendship of Charles and
Charlotte ever inviolate—when they
die, it is desired they will order them-
selves to be placed in my family
vault at _____ let Mr. Reynolds
write a line of forgiveness, on my
tomb-stone : it will soothe me—

—Mr.

—Mr. Templeton is requested to attend my funeral—Charlotte is pathetically invited to put on mourning.—

Alas, alas—where am I wandering?—foolish—foolish Melbank—I have quite lost myself—let me then, while sense is returning, use the precious interval to desire my *will* may be opened, and the articles performed the day after my death.—

E. MELBANK.

CHARLOTTE

LETTER

LETTER CXXVIII.

CHARLOTTE TO CHARLES. —

DEEDLY as I am affected for the amiable Dr. Melbank, I cannot excuse your rashness in going to him, after interdiction—and running the hazard of losing another valuable life. Take some advice upon the matter, I conjure you, and let me know by constant messages, how the good doctor, and my best friend go on. Surely — surely such esteemed characters, will be yet restored, in pity to their admirers, and for the service of mankind.

CHARLOTTE.
LETTER

LETTER CXXIX.

CHARLES TO CHARLOTTE.

OUR best friend is no more. I have power only to write the sentence, and wrap up into a cover the letter that brought the news. How will the tears stream from your dear eyes at the tidings.

CHARLES.

The

(The Inclosed.)

JAMES SPEDMAN to CHARLES.

S I R,

MY excellent master is amongst the angels: he departed this life in the forest miseries of a putrid fever, this morning a little after day break. He was sensible to every thing, and knew every body about him, about two hours before he left the world. The names of Charles, Mr. Reynolds, and one or two more, were several times repeated: he clasped his hands together, and employed his last breath in blessing you all.

all. After this he turned upon his pillow, and (though he exhibited the greatest signs of pain) remained speechless till he expired.

I was with him all the time—I am not afraid of catching any bad sickness in performing my duty to the best man, and the best master that ever lived—God Almighty knows best, in such cases what to do: but I am sure he could not be pleased if I like the rest of the servants, had neglected so worthy a gentleman in such a situation; and I shall ever honour you Sir, for the courage your friendship gave you to come and look at the good doctor, when other people run away from him. I have been

been nineteen years his servant, Sir, on and off, and he has many times saved my life—I certainly shall not now leave him, while he is upon the earth; and yet the physician says he must be put into the ground directly.

I am Sir,

your most humble servant,

JAMES SPEDMAN.

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L E T T E R CXXX.

CHARLES to H. T. Esq;

THE large packet of letters that I send you, will at once apologize and account for my long silence. Neither, Charlotte, Mr. Reynolds, or your friend, have of late been able to take up the pen. It was this day month, that the body of our most worthy benefactor was committed to the earth—I do most truly assure you, that the affluence in which his unequalled generosity has left me, by no means compensate
the

the pleasure I had in his society, and the satisfaction I received from his life.

He has divided the bulk of his fortunes amongst three persons, my Templeton, who certainly could form no possible expectation of his bounty. Here follows a faithful extract from his will.

—“*Item*, To my beloved friend Charles, I bequeath my dwelling-house in St. James’s-Street, with all its furniture, plate, &c. &c.”

“*Item*, I bequeath to Charlotte, in testimony of my esteem for her virtue, and reverence for her misfortunes,

tunes, the sum of two thousand five hundred pounds, to be paid immediately on my decease, or as soon afterwards as the said sum can be conveniently drawn from the funds, where lie certain monies mentioned in other parts of this my last testament."

"*Item*, I give and bequeath, to my servant James Spedman one hundred pounds sterling."

"*Item*, To Charles, Esq; I bequeath one thousand pounds, for the use of Cleora, to be paid out of my cash, now lying, and being in the funds."

Item,

“ Item, I bequeath to the said Charles, Esq; my Suffex estate, subjected to the yearly rent of two hundred pounds, to be paid into the hands of J. Reynolds, Esq; which is a debt due to the said J. Reynolds, Esq; for many years.”

“ Item, To the aforesaid J. Reynolds, Esq; in consideration of interest on the said debt, my houses, lands, and properties, whatsoever, and wheresoever, lying and being in the island of Jamaica.”

“ Item, I bequeath to Charlotte all my pictures in my library, with all my books, paintings, and the miniature of my dear wife Maria, hanging

hanging over the library chimney
piece."

"*Item*, I charge the said Suffex
estate, given to Charles, Esq; with
the annual deduction of one hundred
pounds, to be paid to Charlotte
during her natural life, on every
eighteenth day of August, being the
anniversary of that lady's birth."

"*Item*, I give and bequeath to H.
Templeton, Esq; one hundred gui-
neas for a mourning ring, and any
other testimonies of friendship that
he may choose to employ it in."

"*Item*, I give and bequeath, to
Charlotte, the watch, and some
trinkets

trinkets lying in a little gold box in my front parlour drawers, also my old and favourite dog Pompey, with an annuity of five pounds during his natural life, to be paid out of the Suffex estate, over and above the annuity of one hundred pounds."

Can any words, oh my dear Templeton, be adequate to such circumstances—and yet there is not a single person concerned who would not rather enjoy the dear company of the testator, than the splendid evidences of his tenderness and attention.

And then to die, as he did, in the meridian of life—in a situation so pathetic, at a time so delicately critical!

cal ! Blessed, for ever blessed be his memory upon earth — Rich and abundant be his rewards in Heaven. Never did I see such genuine, unaffected grief and gratitude that mix themselves in the sympathy of Charlotte and Mr. Reynolds.——

Cleora's letter also upon the subject, does her honour.——

Reynolds and I, live at present in the good doctor's house ; and we are so often reminded of his image, and his goodness, in every thing about us, that it is not in the power of gold to charm our grief——

That

That I have still a sigh for Charlotte, is but too certain, and I would most willingly reject all that I am now worth, and, after all deductions, that will, I find, be a considerable fortune—Yes, Templeton, I would yield up every shilling—be again involved — again a prisoner — again liable to all the insults of an unfortunate man—and depend for the remainder of my days upon the precarious efforts of my own hands—had I this minute the privilege of leading her by the hand to the foot of the altar ——

I conjure you to come to town, and let us, in the first place do justice to

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S

our

our benefactor, by erecting to his memory a suitable monument; and let us inscribe on it such sentiments, as express our grief and our gratitude in the most lively manner.



CHARLES.

F I N I S.

our benefactor by erecting to his
memory a durable monument; and
let us imitate in our sentiments,
as experts our grief and our
love in the most lively manner.

CHARLES

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